



THE BARNYARD BULLETIN

July 2026

June Recap

June was an exciting month full of growth, new opportunities, and special celebrations at Cooper Ridge! We kicked off our Summer Program and are grateful to continue our partnership with ICARE throughout the season. Our garden has been thriving, providing plenty of fresh vegetables for participants to harvest and enjoy. One of the biggest highlights of the month was launching speech services at the farm with our very own Carolyne. Her dedication and passion have been instrumental in bringing this valuable service to our participants, and we are excited to see the impact it will have. We also celebrated Cooper Ridge Farm's 6th Anniversary with a special celebration alongside our amazing animal partners who make our mission possible every day.



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Volunteer With Us!

Love animals, the outdoors, and giving back to your community? Join the Cooper Ridge volunteer team! From assisting with sessions to helping around the farm, there are plenty of ways to get involved and make a difference!

Click the link out to learn more and fill out a volunteer application now: [Volunteer Information](#)



<https://www.facebook.com/CooperRidgeFarm>



<https://cooperridgefarm.org/>



<https://shorturl.at/zSiL1>



July 2026

NEWSLETTER

What's Happening at Cooper Ridge?

Board of Directors Welcomes

Dr. Marlee Rodgers

Our Board of Directors is excited to welcome Dr. Marlee Rodgers our team! Dr. Marlee has been our trusted farm veterinarian for many years and knows our animal partners firsthand. Her passion for animal care and her heart for the mission of Cooper Ridge make her a wonderful addition.

Dr. Marlee is the owner of Rodgers Veterinary Clinic in Thomson, Georgia. In her few spare moments, she enjoys spending time on the lake, riding horses, and traveling.

Please join us in giving Dr. Marlee a warm welcome to the Cooper Ridge family!



Looking Ahead

As we move into July, we will be wrapping up our Summer Program for our school-aged participants. While sessions will continue to be available through August 21, attendance during this time is optional.

Fall Registration will open in August 17, with our Fall Program set to begin on September 8. We are excited to welcome participants back for another season of learning, growth, and connection on the farm!

Behind the scenes, our team has also begun planning for two exciting events this fall. Preparations are underway for our annual Family Fun Day in November, and we are continuing to organize our upcoming Golf Tournament, also taking place in November. There are many exciting things on the horizon, and we look forward to sharing more details with you soon!

Success Story

One of the greatest gifts of our farm is watching participants find a place where they feel safe, valued, and at peace. One participant came to Cooper Ridge carrying the weight of a difficult past. Building trust and feeling comfortable in new environments did not come easily, but in a short amount of time, the farm became a place where she could relax, connect, and simply enjoy herself. A special friendship quickly developed between her and Nugget. Her kindness shines through as she carefully counts treats and advocates for him, wanting to ensure every animal, especially Nugget, is included. What may seem like a small gesture is actually a beautiful reflection of her own self. The farm has become more than just a place to visit; it has become a place where she can experience comfort, build meaningful connections, and discover the joy of caring for others. Stories like hers remind us why we do what we do and just how powerful the human-animal bond can be, no matter what their past is like!

“Those who teach the most about humanity aren’t always humans.”
-Donald L. Hicks

Did you know?
Donkeys never forget! A donkey can remember other donkeys and people they have met even after 25 years!

How Can I Help?

Donate Now!



<https://cooperridgefarm.org/donate>



Amazon Wishlist

<https://shorturl.at/zSiL1>



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NEWSLETTER

Beyond The Barn

In this section you'll gain an inside look at Cooper Ridge and the world of Animal Assisted Interventions, while learning how our work creates meaningful change through education and outreach.

**Have you listened to our latest podcast episode yet?
Click the link to the right to listen now!**



Caring For Animals, Changing Lives

We sat down with our farm veterinarian, Dr. Marlee Rodgers, and one of our amazing volunteers, Kristyna, in our most recent podcast episode.

Dr. Marlee and Kristyna joined us to share their expertise on the health, wellness, and care of our incredible animal partners, and why their well-being is essential to successful animal-assisted interventions. Their insights highlight the important role our animal partners play in creating meaningful connections with the people we serve.

Take a look at a few excerpts from the podcast below!

"They feed off of us as much as we feed off of them. And so, to me, when you are start working with animals, it's such a dynamic duo. You find that connection that will just teach you so much more in life than a human will. And it's just an amazing bond."

"If you don't care for that animal, that animal in turn does not care for you. If you're in a production world where you're milking cattle or you're selling beef cattle or you're doing egg production in chickens, if you don't care for that animal, that animal won't do for you. And so, it's a very mutually beneficial relationship. And you have to care for each other. And to me, it teaches a lot of patience and resilience, and we can learn a lot from the animals we work on."

"They teach you how to communicate. If you go out into your pasture, and trust me, I've done this as a young teenager, and I screamed and yelled and threw a tantrum in the field with my horse, and she just looks at me. And she says, get up off the ground. It's going to be OK. You know, you ride and you fall off, and what do they say? Well, you just get back on. Well, that's life. It teaches you to get back on. It teaches you to keep riding and keep going, and it teaches you resilience. It teaches you that not everything's going to go your way, but you just pick up and keep going. And animals are going to love you unconditionally. So you may not have that most nurturing family member, that mother, that father in your life, but that animal is going to love you."

Podcast Link

Spotify:

<https://shorturl.at/OXO2O>

Apple:

<https://shorturl.at/EiqAN>





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NEWSLETTER

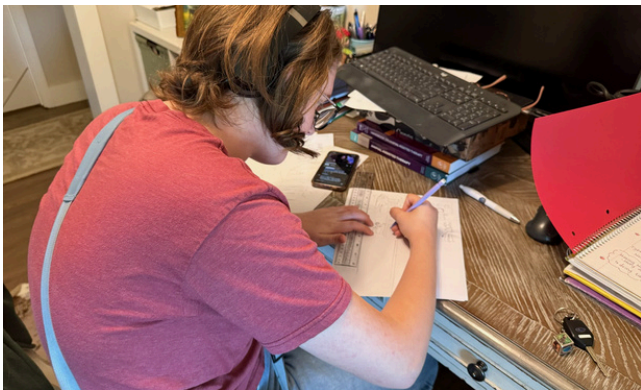
Beyond The Barn Continued

Take a look at what our participants have been working on during sessions!



Where I Belong

One of our incredibly talented participants wrote his very own song about his sessions at the farm! We are so proud of his creativity and the way he put his experiences into words, notes, and melodies. It reminds us just how meaningful these moments can be. Take a look at the lyrics to the right and see the farm through his eyes.



Spy Pigs

During our Spring Program, a group of participants put their creativity to work by creating an original comic book starring some of our beloved animal partners! Together, they dreamed up an exciting adventure featuring our animals on a mission to steal a golden goose egg. From developing the storyline to designing each character, our participants played an important role in bringing this imaginative project to life.

Then our amazing Administrative Assistant, Katelyn, then took all of their ideas and transformed them into a beautifully illustrated comic book. She has poured so much time and talent into making their vision a reality and is continuing to work hard so we can share the finished story with all of you soon!

Projects like this remind us how special Cooper Ridge Farm truly is. We are incredibly grateful for the creativity, passion, and talents of both our participants and staff, who make every day on the farm something to celebrate.

Where I Belong

By: Ben Steed

Welcome to the barn!
Hear those chickens cluck,
Hear that Rooster crow,
Listening to them makes me feel glad

That's what I love about the farm!
Life is never drab,
When you get to learn and have fun.
Cooper Ridge is where I belong!

Jenny is my favorite cow,
I like to give her snuggles.
One of my favorite sounds is listening to
them moo and chew.
They make me feel so happy.

That's what I love about the farm!
Life is never drab,
When you get to learn and have fun.
Cooper Ridge is where I belong!

Hear those pigs pink and snore.
I tell my favorite pig, Earl, stories.
It feels relaxing just to be with them.
Listening to me play soothes them.

That's what I love about the farm!
Life is never drab,
When you get to learn and have fun.
Cooper Ridge is where I belong!

The donkeys bring me lots of joy.
I love to train with them every week.
They're so fluffy and sweet; I love listening
to them bray!
This is why Cooper Ridge is my favorite
place to be!

That's what I love about the farm!
Life is never drab,
When you get to learn and have fun.
Cooper Ridge is where I belong!

Yeah,

Cooper Ridge is where I belong!



July 2026

NEWSLETTER

Golf Classic Information

Come along with us as we tee up for an incredible event that will support the individualized therapy programs that we have here at Cooper Ridge!



West Lake Country Club
November 30, 2026

Volunteers Needed

As we continue preparing for our upcoming Golf Classic, we are looking for volunteers to help make this event a success! We need individuals who are interested in assisting with event planning in the months leading up to the tournament, as well as volunteers who can help on the day of the event with registration, contests, hospitality, and other activities. Whether you can give a few hours or help throughout the planning process, your support makes a tremendous difference. If you're interested in getting involved, please email friends@cooperridgefarm.org

We Need Sponsors!

We are looking for business sponsors to partner with us for this exciting event. All proceeds from the golf classic will directly support our programs and the incredible participants who benefit from them.

If you know of anyone who would be interested in partnering with us, please send us their information, or share this link with them for more information: <https://cooperridgefarm.org/golf-tournament-2026>

Our Sponsors:



Waves of Care, LLC



1304 Richland Avenue West, Aiken, SC 29324-428, 5875



Signarama



Golf Classic Info

Months Until
The Golf Classic:

5



Tickets/ Sponsors

<https://cooperridgefarm.betterworld.org/events/1st-annual-cooper-ridge-farm-gol>



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NEWSLETTER

Meet The Team



Participant Spotlight: Killian M.

Meet Killian! He has been coming to the farm for several years, and he has grown so much during this time! He is an incredibly talented artist who can create just about anything from clay simply by looking at it! When he's at the farm, you'll often find Killian relaxing on the swing. His favorite place to visit is the quail coop, where he loves sitting and watching them run around in peace!

Animal Partner: Oliver

Meet Oliver! He is one of our 2 lovable donkeys here at the farm. Although he's the bigger of the pair, he's also the more reserved brother, letting his sibling take the lead. Oliver loves a treat and gently takes snacks from anyone who offers them. He is very soft-spoken. His bray is more of a whisper than a shout, and sometimes he doesn't seem interested in using his voice at all!



Board Member Spotlight: Nicki Camisa

Meet Nicki! She has served as a member of our Board of Directors since inception, bringing a wealth of knowledge and passion to our organization.



She is a strong advocate for health and wellness, and continually shares thoughtful ideas that help strengthen our mission and expand our impact. Beyond her role on our board, Nicki and her dog Bubba, once a certified therapy team, served individuals in Florida. Through this work, she witnessed firsthand the incredible difference the human-animal bond can make in people's lives. Her unique perspective and dedication to animal-assisted services make her an invaluable member of our Board of Directors.

We are so grateful for Nicki's leadership, compassion, and commitment to helping Cooper Ridge Farm continue to grow and serve our community.



Upcoming Events

July 2-3
Farm Closed

August 17
Fall Registration

August 21
Summer Program
Ends



[https://www.facebook.com/Cooper](https://www.facebook.com/CooperRidgeFarm)

[RidgeFarm](#)



cooperridgefarm.org

