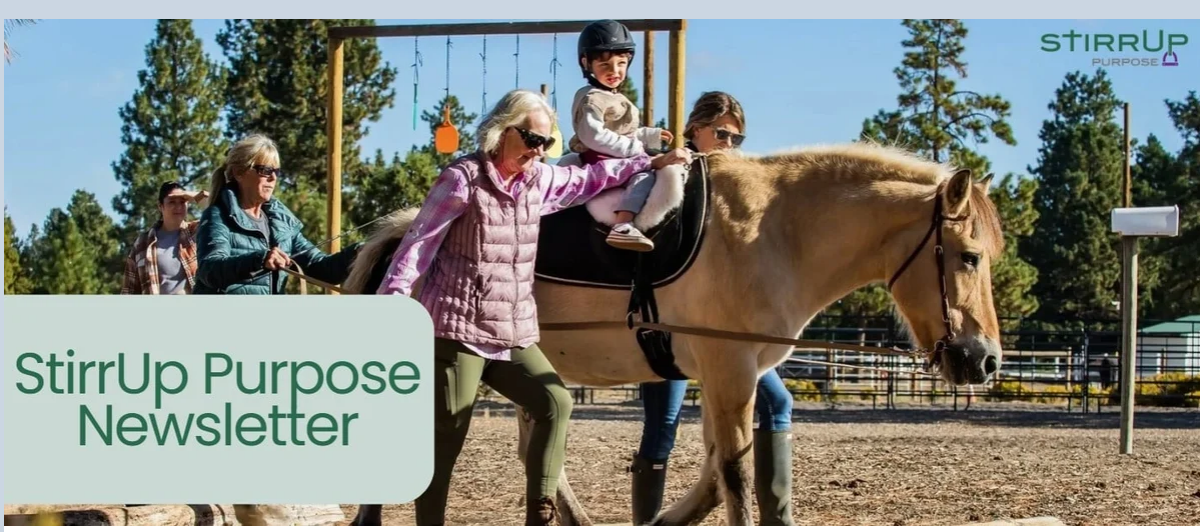




## StirrUp Purpose Newsletter

### It's been an exciting start to 2026!

Our StirrUp Purpose team is growing, our hippotherapy program in Sisters at Pole Creek Ranch is expanding, and the number of sessions we provide on a weekly basis has increased by nearly 20% since December 2025. In that same period, our participant community has grown by almost 40%—meaning more individuals are experiencing the confidence, connection and healing that happens in the saddle and in lessons.

### Growing our team

StirrUp Purpose is growing in all the best ways. We are delighted to welcome Denise Gregory and Marsha Williams to the team—experienced horsewomen whose skills and dedication will be a tremendous asset to our hippotherapy and therapeutic horsemanship programs.

Our herd has expanded with the arrivals of Cazador, affectionately known as “Caz,” and Te'amo. Caz will be an incredible partner for our advanced therapeutic horsemanship riders and Te'amo with her gentle nature will be a welcome addition to our hippotherapy team. Come say hi to Caz and Te'amo! Both of these special horses are still in need of sponsors to support their care.

[Sponsor a Horse](#)

### A special thank you

Behind every milestone at StirrUp Purpose is a community of generous volunteers and donors who make our work possible. We are deeply grateful to Brad and Jan Elliott for sponsoring Pie, BTL Liners for sponsoring Ruby, Debbie Haustedt for sponsoring Rockstar and Bob and Janet Hoyt for sponsoring DeeDee. Horse sponsorships allow us to provide excellent care to our herd while keeping program services affordable and accessible to those who need them most.



Thanks to the generosity of Bryce and Carly Taylor, we have grown our existing equine-assisted learning partnership with Shepherd's House Ministries, increasing sessions to twice each month. This allows greater access to services for individuals experiencing homelessness, addiction and mental health challenges. It provides meaningful respite and hope.



### Participant Spotlight: meet Ellie!

Many of our staff have known Ellie since she was two years old. Ellie has long brought us joy with her giggles and big smile. When she first began pediatric hippotherapy services with the support of physical therapists at Treehouse Therapies, she could hardly hold herself upright on her horse. Over the years, her sessions have emphasized core strength, balance, mobility, gait training and importantly, building strong bonds with the special horses that have partnered with her for hippotherapy. Her parents have noted that those bonds have been the highlight of hippotherapy for her over the years.

Now an adult, Ellie has transitioned to adult physical therapy with Trudi Trygg, formerly Ellie's volunteer side walker since the age of 13! Ellie continues weekly hippotherapy sessions at StirrUp Purpose where she partners with Sage, her equine partner, Trudi and a dedicated volunteer side walker. We love seeing the progress she has made over the years. She now has a strong core and is able to remain seated on Sage without holding on as she winds through our unique Sensory Trail and participates in each activity.

We are so honored to be a part of Ellie's journey and to each week experience the joy that her partnership with Sage brings to her.

### Paddle for a Purpose

Our St. Patrick's Day-themed Paddle for a Purpose event was a fantastic afternoon of fun, friendly competition and community spirit. The event featured an exciting clinic led by Steve Courlang, followed by round robin play for both Advanced and Intermediate/Beginner players. We are incredibly grateful to our sponsors Central Oregon Radiology Associates, Bend Ophthalmology, OWB Carpentry, our volunteers, Steve and everyone who joined us on the courts to support StirrUp Purpose. Thanks to this amazing community, we raised \$10,178 to help further our mission.

### Other ways you can support StirrUp Purpose

We are excited to share that we are now part of the Fred Meyer community rewards program! You can support us while you shop, at no added cost to you by linking the Shopper's Card associated with your digital account to StirrUp Purpose. We encourage you to [learn more](#) and support our programs while you shop!

You can also support StirrUp Purpose at any BottleDrop location by grabbing a blue can bag from us. We have boxes of blue bags with tags in our barn viewing room. Please feel free to take a few. When your bags are full with cans, you can drop them off at any BottleDrop site.

### Upcoming events

#### May 2: Purpose Derby

Join us at the Commonwealth Pub to celebrate the greatest two minutes in sports for a cause that matters. This Kentucky Derby watch party will include games, an auction, delicious food and drinks and a derby hat contest! [Reserve your spot](#) and join the fun!

#### June 18-21: Men's Veteran & First Responder Retreat

We're excited to host our first 4-day backcountry horse camp of the season. We are still accepting applications via this [link](#) for summer retreats. We also are still in need of retreat sponsors.

Retreats provide opportunities for respite and connection for veterans and first responders in our community. [Sponsoring a participant or retreat](#) is a meaningful way to support those who have served us.

#### July 9-12: Women's Veteran & First Responder Retreat

Our women's retreats are filling up fast! If you know of anyone interested in joining one of our upcoming retreats please share this [link](#). Interested in sponsoring a women's-focused retreat? We'd love your support and encourage you to learn more [here](#).

#### July 20-24 & 27-31: StirrUp Purpose Summer Camp

Mark your calendars for summer camp. We'll build riding and horsemanship skills, make new friends and have tons of fun! We are offering two camp experiences to meet each rider where they are: Greenhorns for those new to working with horses and Wranglers for those ready to build on existing skills. Camp Greenhorn will take place July 20-24 9:00am-12:00pm and Camp Wrangler will take place July 27-31 9:00am-12:00pm. Tuition is \$420 with a 50% down payment due May 31 and the remainder due July 1. To sign up, contact [candacem@stirrappurpose.org](mailto:candacem@stirrappurpose.org).