



August 2020 Newsletter

Welcome Back to the Barn!

We are excited to announce our Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and Learning, Peer to Peer Group, Yoga, and Tai Chi programming have returned to in-person classes for Veterans and Active-Duty Military.

Classes are indoor and outdoor and designed to comply with COVID-19 restrictions. **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED** for all classes, as we are limiting class sized to allow for social distancing.

Visit our Facebook page [here](#) to register for classes.

If you are over 65 or have a compromised immune system, we ask you refrain from attending classes at this time & continue to access through Facebook. We hope to see you at the Big Red Barn soon!



Get Tickets NOW for The Big Red Barn Retreat's 3rd Annual Summer Jam

The Big Red Barn Retreat's 3rd Annual Summer Jam presented by Sonic Drive-In will be held on Friday, September 18, 2020 from 7-10:30 p.m. at the Palmetto Citizens Amphitheater in the Doko Meadows Park in Blythewood. Gates will open at 5 p.m. The concert will feature a live acoustic performance

by country music legend, John Anderson. Keeping with a Summer Jam tradition, Carter Lybrand, a member of the military and a local country music performing artist, will open for John Anderson.

John Anderson is a country music icon with one of the all-time great voices in country music. Anderson's four-decade career has produced 23 albums, more than 60 singles (20 reaching the top 10), and a wealth of industry awards including induction in the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame. His No. 1 hits include "Seminole Wind," "Wild and Blue," "Swingin'," "Black Sheep," and "Straight-Tequilla Night." Anderson has a new album, Years, produced by Dan Auerbach of The Black Keys, released on April 10th, 2020.

There will be a variety of food vendors on site. Beer and wine sales will benefit The Big Red Barn Retreat. NO COOLERS will be allowed. Attendees are encouraged to bring blankets and chairs. All event proceeds will benefit programs, classes, and workshops provided at no cost to veterans, active duty military and their families that are struggling with military and combat-related stress issues, like PTSD.

For more information, [click here](#)

Tickets:

General admission || \$20 online in-advance

Military || \$15 online advance ONLY *military ID checked at gate*

Gate || \$30

Children 12 and under are FREE.

Cash and credit/debit will be accepted at the gate.

Rain or Shine- NO REFUNDS.

[Purchase Tickets Here](#)

In compliance with South Carolina DHEC, we will be enacting COVID 19 safety procedures for this event. We are taking reasonable precautions to prevent contamination, however there is always a risk of being exposed to COVID-19 anytime you come in contact with another individual. Click the link below to see all guidelines for the Big Red Barn Retreat's Third Annual Summer Jam.

[COVID-19 Protocol](#)

Veteran Spotlight: Sarah Ziaja

Sarah entered the Air Force in May 2009 as a graduate of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program at the University of Portland in Portland, Oregon. There she earned her BS in Civil/Environmental Engineering with minors in Theology and Environmental Science. Upon her graduation she was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. Her first duty assignment was the 341st Civil

Engineer Squadron at Malmstrom Air Force Base (AFB) in Great Falls, Montana. As an Air Force Officer Sarah deployed with the Army to Afghanistan as the Lead Provincial Reconstruction Team Engineer in 2012 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). While there she also led the PRT's Female Engagement Team and numerous key leadership engagements with government officials in order to revitalize and stabilize the local infrastructure. From 2013 to 2015 she was selected for a special duty assignment with the Navy SEABEES where she deployed twice with them to Rota, Spain and Okinawa, Japan as a Company Commander in support of OEF and Major Combat Operations (MCO) response in the Pacific, European, African and Central Command Theaters.



After her assignment with the Navy SEABEES she was stationed at Joint Base Charleston with the 628th Civil Engineer Squadron. While there the injuries she sustained in Afghanistan, both physical and mental, caught up with her after years of just pushing through and she recognized that it was time to seek help. Unfortunately after 2 years of medical treatments with no positive improvement to her injuries she was medically retired.

All in all, during Sarah's 8.5 years of service, she supported two base infrastructures and assets totaling \$12.1B and deployed three times. Even though she had a short career, it was the people she worked with, led, and helped that made her career fulfilling and considers it her greatest achievement. Since retiring, she desired to continue to serve in some capacity so when she was afforded the opportunity to join and work with the people who were bringing the Warrior PATHH to South Carolina, it was the opportunity she had been waiting for. It has always been the people that have meant the most to her. It is an honor to her to be able to continue service to our military and utilize the experiences she's gone through to help them through their healing process.

The Big Red Barn Retreat Receives UnitedHealthcare Empowering Health Grant

The Big Red Barn Retreat is the proud recipient of a \$45,000 Empowering Health grant from UnitedHealthcare. The funding will allow us to implement the Warrior Progressive and Alternative Training for Healing Heroes (PATHH) program, the nation's first non-clinical program designed to cultivate and facilitate posttraumatic growth among combat veterans and first responders who are struggling with post-traumatic stress and/or combat stress.

South Carolina is home to eight military institutions and almost 425,000 military veterans. Our state also has the highest veteran suicide rate in the country within the 35-54 age group.

The Big Red Barn Retreat was founded in 2014 with the mission to operate

integrated, non-clinical, therapeutic programs for veterans, active-duty, reserve and National Guard personnel, and first responders who suffer from posttraumatic or combat-related stress issues. We aim to help these individuals achieve posttraumatic growth by providing an array of no-cost services, and UnitedHealthcare's significant contribution will help us better support South Carolina's remarkable community of heroes.

UnitedHealthcare launched its Empowering Health commitment in 2018 to expand access to care and address the social determinants of health for people in underserved communities. We are proud to be among the nonprofit organizations in 21 states that share in this \$12.3 million round of Empowering Health funding. Thank you, UnitedHealthcare, for your efforts to support communities in need.

Female Veterans find Healing with Horses

Chrissy Rew, horse specialist,
putting a mask on a horse!



Our female Veterans group kicked off in March to address the issues related to Military Sexual Trauma through working with horses. This group was funded by the Hootie and the Blowfish Foundation and the VA Adaptive Sports Grant. Little did we know, we would be addressing these issues during another traumatic experience: our world being rocked by the Coronavirus. After the first group, we went virtual for 10 weeks. When we resumed meeting in person, we addressed all the safety issues that were within our control such as temperature checks, masks and physical distancing.

The women shared that they were grateful to have the opportunity to leave the house and have this experience with the group and the horses. Over the course of the group, we addressed topics such as self-care, regulation, making requests, setting boundaries, and forming healthy relationships. Significant changes were noted by the treatment team and the individual participants. We were all sad to see the group come to an end.

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy is a distinctive approach to professional mental health treatment designed to empower clients through personal and physical experiences. The model prescribes a hands-on approach where clients are given the space to project and analyze their situation, make connections, and find their own solutions. The Veteran, with the support of professional facilitators, is allowed time to reflect on the process and find application to their life. Since the participant's solutions are personally and individually experienced and founded on his/her intellectual understanding, they tend to be deeper, more profound, and longer lasting.

If you are interested in finding out more about individual or group opportunities,

please contact Stephanie Bowman Czeresko at stephanie@thebigredbarnretreat.org or (803) 556-9379.

Preparations Continue for the Launch of Warrior PATHH this October!





Check out these photos showing the progress of the Leon Irons Lodge which will be home to our Warrior PATHH participants during their 7-day intensive. For more information on Warrior PATHH or to learn how you can help support this program, click the link below.

Warrior PATHH

The Big Red Barn Retreat

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