



www.wingsprograms.org

JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER



Trotting into 2025



Winter is in full swing here at the Wings Ranch.

While we haven't had much snow, the cold weather has set in. The herd has their fuzzy coats, and our volunteers are bundling up to tackle the extra chores that come with the cold.

December was packed with activities, including special appearances at the Stevensville Hotel and Parade of Lights, as well as the Hamilton Living Nativity. **Thank you to everyone who came out to support the organization or donated during the busy holiday month!**

This month's issue features an article on how we keep the herd healthy in the cold.

Upcoming Events

Pint Night at



**February 13
5-8 pm**

Don't miss the chance for Valentine's pics with the minis!

Blacksmith Brewing Company
114 Main Street, Unit A
Stevensville, Montana 59870



Welcome to the Herd!



Mama



Valor

Mama is a Morgan-cross mare in her twenties from the Corvallis area. She was owned by an elderly lady who bought her for her granddaughter, who is now attending Trapper Creek Job Corps. The owner needs to move and cannot keep Mama.

She is calm, has had foals, and is adjusting well to her new environment. Her dental exam is scheduled soon, and her age will be assessed based on her teeth. Mama requires a dental float, hoof trim, and blood work to check for Cushing's disease.

Mama needs a sponsor for her healthcare and vet expenses to restore her health. Once stabilized, we will assess her suitability for riding, as she was previously saddle-trained.

Valor is a 22-year-old Arabian-cross pony gelding from the Corvallis area who spent most of his life with one family. The young woman who grew up with him is now in her 20s, has a new husband and baby, and lives in a rental property where she cannot keep him.

Valor has undergone some necessary maintenance, including a hoof trim and dental care, and is in good health overall. He behaves well with the farrier and loads easily for visits to the vet. Although Valor was ridden extensively in his youth, he has not been ridden in a few years and will need a refresher.

We plan to work on this in the spring and assess his progress. Valor will soon be available for adoption.

Winter at the Ranch

Winter means taking extra care of our horses. They need blankets, fresh water, and plenty of hay all season.

Many horses are fine with their thick winter coats and shelter from the weather, but **older horses or those who struggle to maintain weight might need blankets.** These blankets should fit well, stay dry, and be swapped if it gets warmer to prevent chills, sores, or injuries.

While not all of our horses are blanketed, the ones who are, need extra help in the winter. The horses blanketed at the ranch often have Cushing's which can make growing a coat impossible. If a horse is struggling with arthritis or other chronic structural problems, they need to stay as warm as possible. If a horse is too skinny going into winter or has trouble keeping weight on we blanket.

Our team checks the blankets often, and we will take them off during the day if temperatures are high enough. Every spring, we clean and repair them for the next year. Since blankets can cost a lot, maintaining them helps us save.

Horses usually drink 10 to 12 gallons of water each day, and even more when it's very hot or cold. Keeping their water troughs full and unfrozen is a daily task. **Last winter, we faced freezing conditions that challenged our usual methods, but we managed to keep things running and learned some new tricks!**

In the colder months, horses need about 25% more food because they burn more calories to stay warm. This means more hay and, for our older horses, extra mashes that are easier for them to eat.

Winter brings a lot of extra work and expenses, but seeing our horses cozy in their blankets and munching on hay makes it all worthwhile. **We always welcome more volunteers during the winter—your help & donations make a big difference!**



WE NEED VOLUNTEERS:

There is always something to do around the farm!

Visit

**www.wingsprograms.org/volunteers
to learn more about how you can help.**



Our resident JJ needs some extra help in the winter and keeps warm with a blanket and extra food that keeps his weight up, since he has bad teeth.



Peaches has Cushing's and arthritis so we put socks and boots on to keep her legs and feet more comfortable. We check her feet often to make sure they are not wet or too soft.



The mini's sported decorative blankets at the Parade of Lights!

