

STEPPING STONES RIDING PROGRAM

CONNECTING HORSES & PEOPLE—NO BARRIERS, NO LIMITS

BARN BANTER

Trail Trot 5K

The Stepping Stones Riding Program proudly celebrated a tremendous success with the inaugural Hill Canyon Trail Trot 5K on March 21, 2026. With 200 runners hitting the scenic canyon trails, the event brought together our community for a morning full of energy, connection, and purpose. Set along the beautiful creekside paths and oak-lined trails of Hill Canyon, the race welcomed runners, walkers, and hikers of all levels. Participants enjoyed a course that was both fun and fast, while supporting a mission that truly matters; providing accessible, low-cost riding lessons and horse experiences to individuals of all backgrounds.

One of the highlights of the day was the Kiddie K, where our beloved horse Joey and mini pony Shammie proudly led the youngest participants through their course. Their presence brought smiles to every face and perfectly captured the spirit of the program.

The event wasn't just about racing, it was about community. As one participant shared, "I loved seeing friends and our riders out here having fun, doing something healthy, and supporting SSRP." Another added, "Such a great time for the whole family."

We are incredibly grateful for the overwhelming support from our sponsors, volunteers, and community partners. A special thank you goes out to Nike for showing up in support of our local race, and to all of our generous sponsors who helped make this event possible. We also extend our deepest appreciation to Missy Andrews, whose leadership as Race Director ensured a smooth and memorable event from start to finish.

From competitive runners chasing personal records to families enjoying a beautiful morning outdoors, the Hill Canyon Trail Trot 5K truly delivered on its promise.

With 100% of proceeds benefiting the Stepping Stones Riding Program, this event not only brought people together, it helped move our mission forward. We can't wait to see this event grow in the years to come!



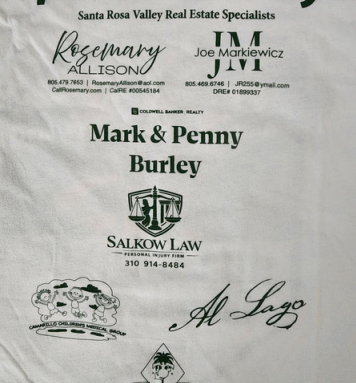
Want more information on SSRP?

Contact us here:
<https://forms.gle/tRJUP19634UzuHrM9>

10241 Hill Canyon Road
 Camarillo, CA 93012

[HTTPS://STEPPINGSTONESRIDINGPROGRAM.ORG](https://steppingstonesridingprogram.org)

Sponsored By:



Trail Trot 5K





Stepping Stones Riders Take on Montana de Oro

The weekend of May 15–17 marked the annual Stepping Stones Riding Program horse camping adventure at Montana de Oro, and what a memorable weekend it was! Twenty-nine riders, family members, and friends made the trip north with 13 horses and 3 dogs in tow for three days filled with riding, laughter, friendship, and unforgettable experiences.

Friday afternoon was a flurry of activity as horses were unloaded, campsites were assembled, and everyone settled into camp. Once the horses were comfortable and the tents were standing, the first trail ride of the weekend set off through the beautiful eucalyptus groves that surround the campground. The towering trees and peaceful trails provided the perfect backdrop for an afternoon ride with friends. Back at camp, family members enjoyed some well-earned relaxation while the younger campers organized what seemed like endless games of wiffle ball.

As evening arrived, everyone gathered for a taco bar potluck, followed by s'mores around the campfire and plenty of time to connect with friends—both two-legged and four-legged. The first night brought chilly temperatures and a memorable wake-up call courtesy of several horses enthusiastically banging their feed buckets around 1:00 a.m., ensuring that nobody slept too deeply.

Saturday dawned bright and beautiful. Breakfast burritos, featuring fresh eggs from Julie's chickens and Benji's legendary camp cooking skills, fueled everyone for the highlight of the weekend—the beach ride.





SSRP Spring Campout



While riders headed out through the trails toward the dunes, parents and spectators drove to the beach to await their arrival. After navigating what many dubbed “Nature’s StairMaster” down the towering sand dunes, families gathered along the shoreline just in time to watch the horses emerge onto the beach. Riders spent the morning exploring the sand and surf, with some horses embracing the waves more enthusiastically than others. Before long, however, everyone found their confidence, leading to the ultimate bucket-list experience: galloping down the beach. The excitement and joy on the riders’ faces created a moment that neither riders nor parents will soon forget.

Following the beach adventure, Meaghan and Benji guided the group back through the dunes and trails to camp for lunch. The afternoon offered time to relax, explore the coastline, tidepool, and discover sea caves along the cove. In one of the weekend’s more impressive feats, Mrs. Meaghan successfully squeezed through a narrow rock opening to explore a hidden sea cave.

By late afternoon, the riders were eager to saddle up again, leading to impromptu bareback races through the sandy eucalyptus trails. Honors for “Best Bronco Ride” went to Pepe and Ruby, while the title of “Fastest Gallop” ended in a tie between Wan and Chisme. It was another adventure that the riders will be talking about for years to come. Saturday night featured a creative potluck made from leftover camp provisions, more s’mores, and the largest campfire of the weekend, complete with colorful flames that gave it a magical, unicorn-inspired glow. On Sunday morning, it was all hands on deck as campers packed tents, loaded trailers, and prepared for the journey home. Of course, no Stepping Stones camping trip would be complete without one final trail ride through the hills before saying goodbye to Montana de Oro.

From beach gallops and campfires to sea caves and horseback adventures, the weekend was filled with memories that will last a lifetime. For many, it was more than just a camping trip—it was a chance to strengthen friendships, build confidence, and experience the unique joy of exploring the outdoors on horseback. Without a doubt, the 2026 Montana de Oro camping trip will be remembered as one of the best yet.

Horse News



Annie

Welcome Annie!

Annie is 8 years old.
Annie was leant to SSRP
from the Macleays.

Horse Updates...

Returning & Leaving...

Pal will be returning to SSRP from dressage training. Spencer left for his new home, Eliana left for rehab.

New Horses!

Five new horses will be coming over to SSRP from Ventura Farms. Work has been underway to clear brush, thin trees, pick-up fencing, move fencing, and install the new fencing for the corrals. Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped in all the different aspects of preparation for the new horses. It takes a village and we couldn't do it without you.



Happy 31st
Birthday to
Zydie

Shania wondering why
someone is in the tree



Picking up new
fencing



Kaelin installing the
new fencing



Events

Stepping Stones Riding Program



HORSEMANSHIP SUMMER CAMP

CONNECTING HORSES & PEOPLE
- NO BARRIERS - NO LIMITS -

\$450

Activities Include:

- Grooming, bathing, catching, leading, and tying
- Learn about nutrition and assisting with feeding
- Equipment instruction and usage – saddling & bridling
- Basic ground skills and handling
- Proper mounting and dismounting
- Arena instruction, equitation and riding exercises
- Trail lessons – learn how to navigate mountain trails safely and with confidence
- Mounted exercises, games & skills
- Arts & crafts

Session 1 = 7/6-7/10

Session 2 = 7/27 - 7/31

Session 3 = 8/3 - 8/7

General Info:

- Age 7 - 10
- Monday - Friday
- 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
- Small groups
 - space is limited

Campers Will Need:

- Signed releases
- Closed toe shoes or boots
- Jeans or riding pants
- Water
- Lunch

**Helmet provided

10241 Hill Canyon Rd.
Camarillo, CA 93012

mshaffer@steppingstonesrp.org
<https://steppingstonesridingprogram.org/>

MANY MANSIONS CAMP - 7/16

Volunteers needed! (9-12pm)

On July 16, SSRP will welcome 100 children from Many Mansions for a special Horse Camp experience. The Many Mansions Youth Enrichment Program provides educational and enrichment activities designed to expand children's knowledge, build confidence, and broaden their understanding of the world around them. SSRP is proud to partner with this outstanding program by offering a memorable day with horses, giving participants the opportunity to learn about horsemanship, connect with these amazing animals, and experience the joy of spending time at the barn.



Save
the
date

Fall Fest 10/3

We need vendors, sponsors, and demos!

Email: steppingstonesridingprogram@gmail.com

CONEJO TRAILS EDUCATION DAYS



Nonprofits for the win! Stepping Stones and Ride On both covered the need for horses at the Conejo Trails Education Days. The local kids all now have an understanding of the right of way on trails and how to share the space including horses. The other volunteers were Dorothy Sullivan (MC), Marty Stewart with her dog Assassin, Tara Farkash and her dog, and Mark Langton with his mountain bike. Of course Joey demonstrated how good Arabian horses can be! 😊

Region 2 AHA

Region 2 Youth Board

R2 Arabian Horse Association Youth Board has been hard at work planning events.

The 2026 board includes:

- Director: Meaghan
- President: Marley
- Vice President: Anna
- Secretary: Summer
- Treasurer: Lindsey
- Other Members:
 - Lilli
 - Carla Jo
 - Aryna
 - Nedra

The youth board regularly coordinates local tours. For example, they recently toured the Cal Poly Pomona equine facilities and the West Coast Equine Veterinary Hospital.

Region 2 sponsors an active youth horse judging team that regularly competes at U.S. National Championship shows.

The region awards dedicated annual scholarships to graduating youth board members.

Join for Free: Any youth 18 or under can claim a Free First-Year Membership to get involved in local club activities, competitions, and leadership programs.

You can reach out directly to the leadership team or view their latest schedule of educational events on the Region 2 Youth Home Page.

2026 Events for Region 2:

- 4/18 - Reining Show at LAEC - Judging Team Practice
- 4/26 - Shepherds Ranch
- 5/1 - Cal Poly campus & barn tour

Upcoming:

- 6/6 - Vet Clinic Tour
- 6/18 - 6/20 - SB Horse Show
- 7/30 - SLO College Tour
- 10/30 - Arabian Horse Youth Judging Contest in Tulsa, OK



Barn Highlights

Ruby (Sponsor of Pepe)

At 16 years old, Ruby is a dedicated rider who has been part of the Stepping Stones Riding Program family for the past four years - growing, learning, and pushing herself every step of the way. Having ridden exclusively at SSRP, she's a true reflection of what consistency, courage, and heart can build. Ruby's favorite part of riding isn't just the easy wins, it's "getting over something hard." Whether that means mastering a challenging skill or building trust with a horse, she thrives in those breakthrough moments. You'll most often find her riding Pepe, a horse she knows well and appreciates deeply. Ruby loves competing in Region 2, especially in Santa Barbara, where she enjoys both the atmosphere and the opportunity to challenge herself.

In 2025, she also stepped into the arena in a different way by competing in the Region 2 judging competition in Tulsa, showing her well-rounded understanding of the sport.

Ruby admits one of her biggest fears is "messing up a horse" or being the problem, but that awareness is part of what makes her such a thoughtful and conscientious equestrian. She's fallen seven times along the way, but her advice to others says it all: don't give up.

Looking ahead, Ruby hopes to one day rescue horses who haven't been given opportunities - training, riding, and helping them find new homes before starting the journey again. Keep it up Ruby!



Shepherds Ranch 4/26

Disneyland for horses and riders...

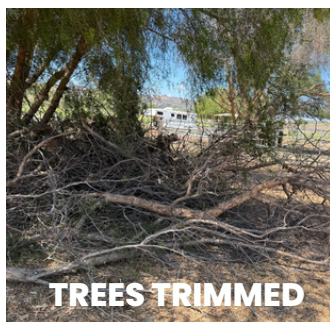


Working Hard



Additions/Improvements/Donations

BARN MAINTENANCE



INTERESTING FACT...

Arabians are known as “people horses.” This is because many Arabians interact and bond with people more easily than other horses and will often choose the company of people over that of other horses. Legend has it that this is because the Bedouins bred them to be very people-oriented, even bringing favored horses into their homes to live amongst their families.

Keep an eye out for SSSSSteve



WISH LIST

New muck cart x 4

Hay barn/Carport

Stacked Saddle
Racks

Running
martingales

XL First Aid Kit
w/ box

Helmets-
2 XS, 2 S, 1 M