



MC RIDING HIGH WITH LEASE OF SCOTS RIDGE FARM

Maryville College's largest athletic facility is located 10 miles northeast of campus, in nearby Rockford. Leased in 2018, Scots Ridge Farm is 97 acres of rolling pasture and woodland that includes 15 paddocks, three barns and three riding rings, including a new 225-by-180-foot steel free-span covered arena.

It's the home of the College's Equestrian Team, and the owners' recent \$2 million investment in renovations and expansion has made it a state-of-the-art equine facility, capable of accommodating up to 64 horses. The College owns 12 horses for the team; the rest are owned by individuals who pay boarding fees that make the farm a self-sustaining operation.

"Maryville College is incredibly fortunate to have a lease agreement for this beautiful and impressive facility, and most importantly, to have a partnership with the owners, whose mission for the Farm is in alignment with the College's mission," said Maryville College President Dr. Bryan F. Coker. "Having Scots Ridge Farm as a resource is yet another way that we differentiate ourselves from our competitors and also celebrate being 'of and for' this region."

Six full-time and several part-time Maryville College employees, including Equestrian Team Director **Christen McCammon Khym '96**, provide high-quality, year-round care for the animals, property and equipment.

In addition to the College program, Scots Ridge Farm sponsors

an interscholastic (K-12) team and is a nationally recognized Pony Club Center. Lessons for all levels and ages are offered.

Beyond riding, the College plans to utilize the farm for curricular and other co-curricular purposes. The potential exists for study and projects across multiple fields of study – the social sciences, as well as the natural, behavioral and health sciences. It's well suited for recreation and retreats and as a resource to the larger East Tennessee community.

With renovations and the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic mostly behind them, Khym and farm owners are excited to start realizing the farm's potential.

"We want to continue to be recognized as a model for horse care, horsemanship, sportsmanship, integrity, ethics, land stewardship and inclusion/accessibility," Khym said, referencing long-term goals. "We want to provide good jobs, support local farm vendors and host events for all types of riders."

"We also strive to be a vibrant community for educators and horse lovers where people of all ages work together and where the cost of accessing these wonderful creatures is minimal for students," she added. "We want to partner actively with the College in admissions, athletics, academics and student life and offer programs to the public that allow them to access the healing and teaching powers of horses."

For more information, visit scotsridgefarm.com.





Completed earlier this year, Scots Ridge Farm's covered arena (pictured right) is a 225-by-180-foot steel free-span structure with specialized GGT dust-free elite footing and LED lights. Large enough for a jump course, it is used for lessons, shows and recreational riding. The barn connected to it has 22 stalls.



MC EQUESTRIAN TEAM IN GROWTH MODE

Christen McCammon Khym '96 started the Maryville College Equestrian Team as a student. Nearly 30 years later, she continues to lead it as team director and award-winning coach who has mentored several nationally ranked riders.

A member of the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) Zone 5, Region I, the College's team competes in hunter seat horse shows against colleges and universities such as Middle Tennessee State University, the University of the South, Rhodes College and Vanderbilt.

The 2022-2023 team is 10 riders strong, comprised of undergraduate students of all experience levels. Some members bring their own horses to ride competitively while others lease horses at the farm.

Team members have lessons twice a week and often participate in extra clinics and home horse shows, in addition to College shows, according to Khym. Responsible for farm work, assistance at Interscholastic Equestrian Association home shows and the full care of the horses they ride, team members easily spend more time out of the saddle than in it. However, the hard work pays off.

Among the many benefits of riding and being on the equestrian team is developing a "high degree of maturity, responsibility, organization and time management," Khym explained. "Riders also develop compassion, patience, sportsmanship and an appreciation of nature and land conservation and stewardship. And they develop skills – in addition to athletic skills, they



The 2021-2022 MC Equestrian Team, along with instructor Deb Willson (far right), traveled to Middle Tennessee State University for competition Feb. 12-13.

develop skills to teach, lead and work with all ages and types of people."

Khym said the program is currently in a growth mode; in time, she expects to have multiple riders competing at each level within the IHSA program and celebrate qualifications for regional, zone and national finals. She's also hopeful for the success of her mentees after graduation.

"One of my long-term goals for the team is to graduate the next generation of equestrian professionals and the next generation of kind, compassionate and conscientious workers in any profession," she said.