

Equine Therapy for Veterans

MARSHALL, N.C. -- This Veterans Day, one local horse ranch is offering up more ways to welcome them home. Heart of Horse Sense in Marshall offers equine therapy free of charge to veterans with PTSD.

"What's not to love," says Shannon Knapp, Founder of Heart of Horse Sense, as she feeds a horse named Scout. "The view from the office is great, I get to play with these guys every day and watch what happens when people come to awareness about how to change."

Shannon has rescued about 25 horses from abuse and neglect. On her farm, they transform into healers.

"Every morning, at about 6:30," explains Dave Ferruolo, a veteran who has been staying on the ranch, as he pets a horse named Shiloh, "I come up to the outdoor paddock and she comes up to me. So, for the last four or five mornings, her and I have had this little conversation."

On the ranch, veterans work through the hurdles of PTSD that have affected their civilian life. Learning patience from the animals and seeing the consequences of their attitudes.

"If I show up as someone who is safe to him and someone who can effectively lead him, then the horse will connect. If I show up with any other pretension, then the horse is going to react," says Ferruolo.

Heart of Horse Sense is teaming up with another local provider of alternative therapy, Helios Warriors, for a fundraiser Sunday. Helios Warriors provides holistic treatment for PTSD, including massage therapy and acupuncture. The two programs will be at Highland Brewery at 2pm Sunday for VetFest. Proceeds from the event go towards providing more free programs for veterans. For more information on VetFest, [click here](#).