

Veteran Suicide Prevention Task Force: Equine therapy on display at Milwaukee Urban Stables' family-friendly open house event June 3

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MILWAUKEE — The benefits of equine therapy for Veterans, as well as their families, will be on display during “Prissy & PJ’s Private Party,” an open house event for Milwaukee Urban Stables.

Geared toward families, the free, fun event will be 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, June 3, at Milwaukee Urban Stables, 143 E. Lincoln Ave.

Milwaukee Urban Stables provides equine-assisted therapy and learning programs for the community. It recently launched programming for Veterans, offering group therapy sessions. In addition, a new program aimed at helping Veterans improve communication skills with their families will be starting soon.

“We’re particularly excited about working with Veterans and their families,” said Mary McIntosh, executive director of Milwaukee Urban Stables. “One of the things Veterans sometimes struggle with is reconnecting with their families. This is a great opportunity for families to be able to connect with their Veterans, all while using the therapeutic power of the horses to bring people together.”

The event will include about 20 resource tables for Veterans and their families, featuring games for kids, giveaways and contests. Attendees can learn about Milwaukee Urban Stables’ programs, meet some of the horses, interact with the Milwaukee Police Mounted Patrol and get kisses from the “hosts” of the event, Prissy and PJ, a pair of miniature donkeys.

“It’s definitely going to be a fun family event,” said Dona Drew, co-chairwoman of the Southeastern Wisconsin Veteran Suicide Prevention Task Force, which is co-hosting the event. “This helps connect Veterans with agencies we work, but we’re also reaching out to Veterans thriving in our community who want to go to events that focus on families, not just Veterans.”

There will be equine therapy demonstrations, horse grooming stations, refreshments and lunch. Veterans Outreach of Wisconsin will be on site collecting donations for its Veterans Market, which provides food and toiletries for Veterans in need.

Though this is free event, registration is encouraged. Attendees should wear closed-toe shoes (no flip-flops) and refrain from feeding the animals.