

In the News: Horse Network

How “Rocket Pony” Ulyssa Found Her Calling

When pinto pony Ulyssa was finally confiscated by law enforcement in March 2023 after years of living in less-than-ideal conditions, her future appeared uncertain. The 13-year-old mare had been living alone, intended as a pony for her owner’s grandchildren. Animal Control had a history of concerns about the pony’s welfare over five years, and when her condition declined, a vet examined her and found she had a body condition score of two out of nine on the Henneke Horse Body Condition Scoring System (depending on the breed, a four or a five is an ideal score), meaning she was significantly malnourished.



DEFHR’s Leigha Schrader took Ulyssa out to many different venues as part of her training program, including to competitions.

After she was seized, she was sent to Days End Farm Horse Rescue (DEFHR) in Woodbine, MD. With her only medical issue being her weight, Ulyssa quickly thrived under DEFHR’s expert care and blossomed into a bright, engaging, and personable pony.

In the summer of 2023, Ulyssa joined DEFHR’s training program under the watchful eye of trainer Leigha Schrader.

“She had very little to no experience under saddle, so I restarted her from the ground up, beginning with groundwork,” said Schrader. “I loved working with Ulyssa and nicknamed her ‘Rocket Pony.’ She was keen and always down for adventures and learning new skills. She was forward-thinking, and whenever I start ponies under saddle, I have kids in mind. Safety is my priority, and I always want to give ponies a solid foundation to help them succeed as safe, fun mounts for younger riders.”



In a short space of time, Ulyssa transformed from unbacked to confidently jumping.

When teenage adopter Samantha Everett and her mother, Amy Everett, spotted Ulyssa’s adoption listing on DEFHR’s website, they “fell in love with her right off the bat.” It was titled “Meet Rocket Pony!” and included [an adorable video](#). They learned about the organization from a friend who had adopted a horse from DEFHR. Having looked for a pony for Samantha for some time, they decided to make the five-hour trip from Chesapeake, VA, in December 2023 to see Ulyssa.

“The search for a perfect horse was a challenge as we looked at many,” recalled Amy. “Samantha had been taking riding lessons for three-and-a-half years before we adopted Ulyssa. “When she rode Ulyssa, it was like they were meant to be together. Her size, markings, and disposition were what sold us; she was the perfect pony for our family.”

[Read The Full Story on Horse Network](#)

[Currently Available Horses](#)

2025 Equine Welfare Charity Golf Tournament



Get ready to tee off for a great cause at the 2025 Equine Welfare Charity Golf Tournament on Thursday, June 12, 2025, at Worthington Manor Golf Club in Frederick County, MD. This charity tournament benefits DEFHR, so spend a day on the greens while making a difference in the lives of rescue horses. Whether you’re a seasoned golfer or just playing for fun, every swing helps provide essential care, rehabilitation, and second chances for equines in need.

Enjoy exciting prizes, delicious food and drinks, and plenty of fun while supporting a mission that saves lives. Limited spots are available, so register today.

[Register Now](#)

Did You Know?



All the horses at DEFHR wear color-coded halters: green, yellow, red, or purple. Each horse is assigned a color based on its handling needs.

- Horses with a green-coded halter (pictured) are beginner friendly, and new volunteers can handle them
- Yellow-marked horses need an intermediate handler since they might still be learning or participating in a training program
- Horses in a halter coded red require an advanced handler who is competent with horses on the ground
- Those wearing a halter marked purple are for staff only; they are usually stallions, new arrivals, youngsters, or feral horses

Spring Break Camp



There’s still time to sign up for DEFHR’s one-day Legacy Camp Breakout: A Spring Break Adventure on Friday, April 18, 2025. Geared toward children aged seven to 17, the fun-filled day on the farm will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Registration closes on Tuesday, April 11. Spaces are limited, so reserve your spot today.

Bookings are also open for DEFHR’s summer camps in June, July, and August. For further information, visit <https://defhr.org/education-programs/youth-legacy/>

[Sign Up for Legacy Camp Breakout](#)

Calling All Scouts



The first DEFHR Scout Day of 2025 will be held on May 3, 2025. It’s a great way for Scouts of all ages to get hands-on horse experience, whether they’ve never been around horses or have years of experience. Scouts rotate through multiple stations, which include topics like grooming, leading horses, and how DEFHR rehabilitates horses. A farm tour and riding demonstration are also on the docket. All Scouts will get a patch for participation and completion of all stations. Our second Scout Day will be on October 25.

[Register for Scout Day](#)

Featured Horse of the Month: Jestling Jax



15.2hh Thoroughbred gelding

Jestling Jax is a 15.2hh 13-year-old off-the-track Thoroughbred (OTTB) gelding available for adoption at DEFHR. He is missing one eye, but it does not adversely affect him. He has been given training from the ground up while at DEFHR and is going nicely under saddle in walk, trot, and canter, and has started pole work and jumping small cross rails.

He is a very straightforward guy and is extremely comfortable to ride. Jax will make an excellent partner for dabbling in just about any equestrian activity! For more information, visit <https://defhr.org/horses/jestling-jax/>, email adopt@DEFHR.org, or click the button below.

[More About Jestling Jax](#)

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