

# Students gain horse breeding experience



Anna Grace/Index

New mothers, Buffy and Gypsy, nurse their foals Tuesday in the indoor riding arena at the University Farm. The foals were born last week as part of the Equestrian Reproductive Practicum course, giving students hands-on experience with breeding and foaling.

## Students gain hands-on experience as they welcome new foals

BY EMILY BATTMER

Features Editor  
index.featureseditor@gmail.com

After months of anticipation and preparation, students, faculty and staff have welcomed two new members to the Truman State University Farm.

Two female foals were born Feb. 28 and March 3 at the University Farm, said lecturer of equine science Emily Costello. Each year, the Farm breeds two to four mares as part of the Equine Reproduction Practicum class, Costello said. These were the only University-owned mares due this spring, she said.

To breed the horses, Costello said the Farm usually uses University-owned stallions, but occasionally other individuals or universities will donate a stallion's sperm to artificially inseminate the mares.

This year, one of the mares was bred with a University-owned stallion and the other was bred with a donation from Iowa State University, Costello said.

Costello said most of the foals are kept at the University Farm for as long as they fit in the program.

"We occasionally get requests from former students to breed a particular mare and a particular stallion so we'll do those for them, but in general we use the baby horses as part of our horse training classes," Costello said. "If they're good enough, we use them for our equestrian team practices, horsemanship practice and oth-



Anna Grace/Index

Gypsy's foal stretches her legs Tuesday in the riding arena. The breeding and foaling process gives students hands-on experience and exposure to potential future careers.

er equestrian classes."

Students are involved with the breeding process from the beginning, Costello said, when they learn in class how to ultrasound the mares and decide when they're ready to breed. Then, the horses are artificially inseminated and the class checks a couple weeks later to see if they can find an embryo. After that, they wait.

"For the next seven or eight months we don't do much with them, just watch them get fat-

ter and make sure everything's progressing OK," Costello said.

As the horses approach their due dates, Costello said the class watches for signs to see when the mare is ready to foal. The horse's milk will start to turn more white and their muscles will loosen in preparation for the birth, she said.

Once there are a sufficient number of signs, students will stay with the mares and watch them overnight.

Unfortunately, no students

were able to see the births this year, Costello said.

"Despite our best efforts, with 13 days of foal watch, mares are sneaky," she said. "In general, they can do it on their own, but it's useful if nothing else from a teaching aspect for us to be able to witness their birth."

The first mare to give birth this semester is known to be especially tricky and foaled in the pasture, Costello said. The other foal was born during mid-morning when Costello was

the only person at the Farm to watch.

Kelly Winsco, assistant professor of agricultural science, teaches the Equine Reproduction Practicum class each spring semester.

She said the course gives students hands-on experience with applied reproduction techniques. Each year, students breed horses to produce foals for the following year and assist mares as they get close to foaling, she said.

"The foals that we're foaling out right now were bred in last year's class and then we'll breed the mares for next year," Winsco said.

To decide which mares to breed, Winsco said the class looks at the horses' bloodlines and their purposes on the Farm. If a horse is heavily used for riding classes and the equestrian team, for example, Winsco said the class probably won't breed that horse because it would take her away from those activities.

Winsco said she thinks students gain valuable hands-on experience and exposure to possible career paths with their heavy involvement in the horse breeding and foaling process.

"There's a lot of job opportunities for foaling managers and breeding managers so I think students get a good look at that," she said.

One more foal is expected to be born this spring at the Farm, Winsco said. The mare is not University-owned, but Truman students were involved with the breeding process.

Winsco said the mare is due for foaling March 12 and said she hopes the foal will be born during midterm break.

# Art project seeks to build community

## A new mural at the Arts Center seeks to build a sense of community camaraderie

BY EMILY BATTMER

Features Editor  
index.featureseditor@gmail.com

The front of the Kirksville Arts Center is getting a major facelift, said Judy Neuweg, Kirksville Arts Association Executive Director.

The green tile currently adorning the front of the building will be replaced with a Kirksville Arts legacy mosaic mural depicting the Kirksville community and getting community members involved in its creation, Neuweg said.

The project, called "The heART of Kirksville," is funded by the Freeman Foundation, a nonprofit organization that has sponsored other local projects, such as the creation of the statue at the Ruth W. Towne Center. Demolition of the front of the building begins March 11 and Neuweg said the entire project will culminate in a celebration April 5.

"It's going to depict different things that are highlights in our community — education, medicine, the flora and fauna of the area, hunting, some industry farming — just everything that makes up our community," Neuweg said.

Wisconsin-based artist Connie Greany will design the mural. Beginning March 18, Greany is coming to Kirksville for two weeks to work on the project with elementary, middle and high school students, organizations and individuals throughout the community.

Neuweg said she knew someone who knew Greany, so Arts Association members met with her to see what the project would entail and what it might cost.

The idea for the mural has been discussed for about a year and a half, she said, and now it is coming underway.

Neuweg said she wanted to do an art project to bring the community together and create something representative of the area.

The mural is not the first community-oriented project the Arts Association has done. The first public art project the Arts Association did was create the murals on the south side of the building, Neuweg said. Area students created them about five years ago.

More than 1,000 students at the Kirksville elementary, middle and high schools will make tiles for the mosaic mural, Neuweg said, and community organizations, including 1000 Hills Rotary, Kiwanis and Optimists, will contribute to the project.

"We're always saying that our community makes a difference and we're also considered the northern star of Missouri, so we wanted to bring art to the community but in doing that we also wanted to include them," Neuweg said. "By including all members of the community we're trying to express what our community is about."

Mural committee co-chair Karen Mayhew said in addition to the public school children who will contribute to the project, home-schooled and private-schooled students have been invited to participate as well.

The tiles will be pre-cut, one- to two-inch squares of clay, Mayhew said. Each person who contributes to the project will take a toothpick and create their individual design on the tile, she said.

After that, she said volunteers will come to the Arts Center to paint them and then they'll be ready for firing in the kiln.

Mayhew said she'd like to see Tru-



Submitted Photo

An artist displays the tile she designed for a mosaic, similar to the ones Kirksville residents will create for the new Arts Center mosaic mural. The mural is a community art project designed to bring residents together.

man State students get involved with the project as well. She said she would encourage any student who is walking by to stop for five minutes and make a tile.

"We want to include [Truman] students even though they're maybe not long-term members of the community, because they're definitely members of the community right now while we're doing it," Mayhew said.

Kirksville Arts Association president Arletta Nelson said the mural will create a lasting legacy. School children who create a tile for the mural might grow up and move away, and when they do they can bring their children back to show them the mural, she said.

"The school children that are coming in or the businesspeople and the various

different groups that are creating a tile can say they were a part of this mural that will last for generations," Nelson said.

Nelson said the Arts Association focuses on education but wants to include all ages in the creation of these community art projects.

"It's a way to get people involved and art is a wonderful way of educating people, sparking new ideas and striking up a conversation about something besides the weather," Nelson said. "It's just a good way to bring people together in order to foster some sort of communication."

Anyone who wants to get involved with the project can contact the Arts Association at (660) 665-6500.