

Jr Mule Skinner Education







September 2, 2025

WELCOME!!

I would like to welcome the 5th Annual American Mule and Bluegrass Festival to the City of Shelbyville, Tennessee. We are very honored to be the host city for the second largest mule show in the United States.

I especially want to recognize and welcome all of Bedford County's 4th graders who will be attending the Jr. Mule Skinner Program this year. It will be an exciting time as each of you will learn about the history and the contributions of the American Mule and Bluegrass Music and get to enjoy lots of other fun activities working towards a Jr. Mule Skinner Certificate.

Additionally, I would like to extend an invitation to everyone to come out and enjoy all the American Mule and Bluegrass Festival has to offer. It will kick off at the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration Grounds on September 25th – 27th with over 100 classes from western ranch to gaited and pulling and there will be a chance to win a mule colt for a \$5 donation with all donations going Misson Mules, a nonprofit bringing disaster relief to hard to reach areas.

The City of Shelbyville is proud to support this event.

Sincerely,

Randy Carrol

Mayor

What Makes a Mule so Unique?

History of the Mule

A mule is the offspring of a male donkey (jack) and a female horse (mare). Horses and donkeys have different numbers of chromosomes across the species. Of the two first-generation hybrids between these two species, a mule is easier to obtain than hinny, which is the offspring of a female donkey (jenny) and a male horse (stallion).

The size of a mule and work to which it is put depends largely on the breeding of the mule's mother (dam). Mules can be lightweight, medium weight, or when produced from draft mares, of moderately heavy weight. Mules are reputed to be more patient, hardy, and long-lived than horses, and are described as less obstinate and more intelligent than donkeys.

Mules have been known in the Holy Land since about 1040 BC, the time of King David, when the mule replaced the donkey as the "Royal Beast," the "riding animal of princes."

Anatomy

The eye socket sits out more than a horse and allows mules to see four feet for making the right step. The mule inherits the extra rib from the donkey. Their ears are longer than a horse allowing them to hear better than a horse but shorter than a Donkey's ear. They live longer than horses, some live to be 30 to 40 years old. The mule inherited the best from both parents. The horse mother passed on her athletic ability. From the wise donkey: intelligence, broader range of vision, longer ears that helped cool the animal down in hot weather and a smaller hoof than a horse's that made him more sure-footed.

What Valuable Contributions has the mule made to America? Food and Agriculture

One farmer with two mules could easily plow 16 acres a day. Mules not only plowed the fields, but they harvested crops and carried the crops to market. On tobacco farms, a mule-drawn planter was used to set the plants in the ground. Harvested tobacco was pulled on wooden sleds from the fields to the barns.



Roads, Railways and Canals

At the beginning of the 20th century, mules were used to build roads, railways, telegraph and telephone lines, as well as most of the large dams and canals.

Mules were also instrumental in one of the nation's greatest engineering feats- the Panama Canal.

They pulled canal boats along the Erie Canal in the early 19th century Mules helped build the Rose Bowl in Pasadena

They even assisted the beginning of the "space age" by pulling the first jet engine

to the top of Pike's Peak to be tested - a successful test that led to the creation of the U.S. Space program.



Mules Support Our Military

Mules have played an important role in military action throughout this nation's history. Pack mules provided unlimited mobility to cavalry, infantry, and artillery units. The mule is the mascot of the U.S. Army. In an Army Manual, "Special Forces Use of Pack Animals", it states, "Animal transport systems can greatly increase mission success when hostile elements and conditions require the movement of combat troops and equipment by foot". The manual goes on to describe the characteristics of the mule as having intelligence, agility and stamina, which make them excellent and necessary pack animals.

Mules support Fire Protection

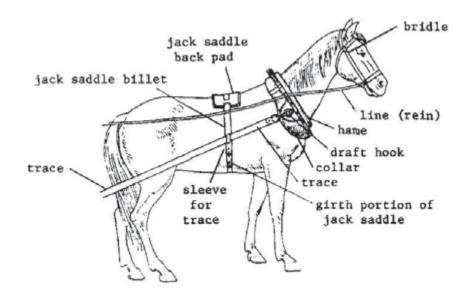
Towns throughout the country often used mules to pull fire-fighting equipment, and many western towns were originally laid out with extremely wide streets to allow mule teams to turn around. Forest fire fighters use mules to pack shovels, chain saws, and food to support the effort of fighting fires and prevention of fires.

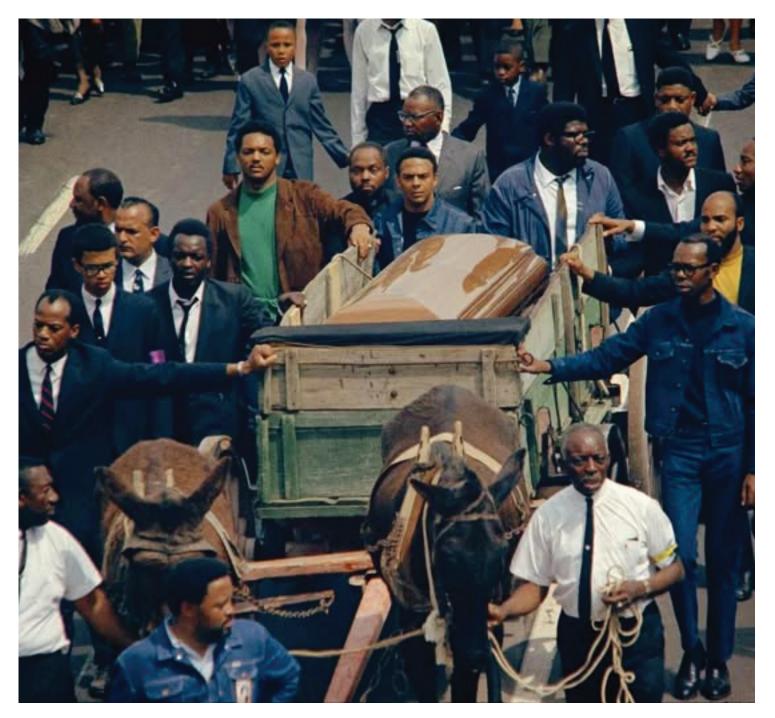
Mules Used for Pleasure Riding

Mules under saddle are used to show and compete in different gaits, dressage, jumping, racing, and ranch style performances. Many are used to trail ride the hills and valleys all over the USA.

Mules pulled wagons from east to west during the settlement of America. Today they are used to take a Sunday afternoon drive on a back road or wagon trail. Saying goes "the winner of this genetic mix was the mule, and those smart enough to ride one."

Parts of the Harness





Dr. Martin Luther King was transported in procession to his burial in a cart pulled by two humble mules. When asked why I like mules, it's because of the humble spirit and willingness they miraculously maintain amidst the unimaginable burdens they have endured, both physically and in the deeply rooted, less than, half breed, prejudice many choose to carry and pass on down the line. Meanwhile, they have always done all the work nobody else wanted to do, but needs to get done. That reflection is paralleled in our culture with shameful and blatant abundance. For all they have done for people they have always had the least amount of friends to help them. My mules have taught me how genuinely nourishing and rewarding it can be to extend a kind hand.



The Cowgirl Poet

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Liz Hughey is a seasoned mule advocate and horse enthusiast who spent the better part of her twenties, mule packing and horse guiding in the National Forests and Wilderness Areas of Northwest Colorado. She is currently a "mud puddle loving mom" to her 5 year old son, and the grazing manager of her families Red Angus Beef ranch in Southeastern Indiana.

After a few years of reading books for an hour or more per day to her child, Liz found a voice as an author. Her books launched in 2017 and inspire children to think actively about environmental stewardship, livestock husbandry, and the full circle of life, seasons, and the importance of love in our health and life.

FEATURED PRESS

Liz is published by and currently writing columns on mule/horsemanship for Western Mule Magazine.

You will also be able to read about her work on the family farm in *Rural Heritage Magazine*.

Liz's poetry can also be read in *Cowboy Poetry Press*, State of the Cowboy III, October 2017.

Tune into "<u>SPARK:Careers in Agribusiness</u>". A podcast series, hosted by Paulsen President Sara Steever, featuring in-depth interviews with successful leaders in agribusiness careers and hear an interview with Children's Book Author, Liz Hughey.

Check out <u>Small Town Big Deal</u>, Season 7, Episode 22, "Missiles and Mules" and see an interview with Liz and "<u>The Mule Artist" Bonnie Shields</u> at <u>Mule Day</u>, Columbia, TN, 2018.

History of Bluegrass

Bluegrass music, which has its roots in the mid-1940s, is a genre deeply connected to American folk traditions, particularly those of the Appalachian region. The name "bluegrass" originates from the Blue Grass Boys, a band formed in 1939 by Bill Monroe, who is often referred to as the "father of bluegrass." The term "bluegrass" itself may have been adopted in the late 1950s and is also associated with Kentucky bluegrass, a type of grass common in a region of central Kentucky.

The distinct sound of bluegrass was pioneered by Bill Monroe's band between 1946 and 1948. This band included key members like guitarist Lester Flatt, banjoist Earl Scruggs, fiddler Chubby Wise, and bassist Howard Watts. Their collaboration set the standard for the instrumental configuration and sound that defines bluegrass to this day. Initially, this music was unique to the Blue Grass Boys, but it gradually evolved into a recognized musical style as other bands began to play in a similar manner.

One of the pivotal moments in bringing bluegrass to a wider audience came in 1967 when "Foggy Mountain Breakdown," an instrumental banjo piece by Flatt and Scruggs, was featured in the movie "Bonnie and Clyde." The film's success introduced this iconic bluegrass tune to a global audience, further cementing the genre's place in popular culture.



Bluegrass music has strong ties to older musical traditions from the British Isles, with many songs in the genre originating from English and Scottish ballads. Songs like "Pretty Polly" and "House Carpenter" are examples of how these traditions have been preserved in the Appalachian region. The genre also has connections to various forms of rural dance music, such as buckdancing and flatfooting, which were commonly accompanied by bluegrass tunes.

The genre gained broader recognition and popularity with the advent of audio recording and the post-war country/western music industry, which marked the golden era of traditional bluegrass. While amateur musicians have played a significant role in the spread of bluegrass, touring musicians and dedicated radio stations have been instrumental in shaping its evolution and the development of its various subgenres.

Characterized by its high energy, complex instrumental techniques, and deep-rooted storytelling, bluegrass continues to be a vibrant and influential genre in American music, with its legacy reaching audiences worldwide through iconic moments like the inclusion of "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" in "Bonnie and Clyde."

Junior Mule Skinner Test Your Knowledge

1.	n mule is the of a male donkey			and
	a female			
		ys are different spec	cies with different	numbers of
		and work to which i	•	on the breeding of
				these two species, a
		btain than a		
	female donkey	and a	male horse	
5.	The eye	_ sits out more thar	n a horse and allo	ws the mule to see
	feet for ma	aking the right step.		
6.	Mules have been l	known in the Holy La	and since about 1	040 BC, the time of
	King David, when	the mule replaced th	ne donkey as the	
		_", the riding animal	of "	"
		_ inherits the extra r		
8.	The	are longe	er than a horse alle	owing them to hear
		but		
		vo mules could easil		
10	. Mules	our military	/ and	protection.
11.	Forest	use	e mules to pack sh	novels, chain saws,
		rt their efforts of figh		

Thank you for evaluating your knowledge. You are truly a Jr. Mule Skinner!!

Fill in the blank words					
Hinny	Hinny Horse Firefighters Jenny		Sixteen		
Firefighters			Chromosomes		
Jack	Four	Socket	Stallion		
Horse	Princes	Mule	Hybrids		
Prince Offspring		Ears	Royal Beast		

The Chuckwagon

A chuckwagon is a horse-drawn wagon traditionally used as a mobile kitchen on the prairies of the United States and Canada. It was primarily used for storing and transporting food and cooking equipment during cattle drives and by traveling workers like cowboys and loggers. The concept of the chuckwagon is credited to Charles Goodnight, a Texas rancher, who modified a Studebaker army-surplus wagon in 1866 to meet the needs of cowboys driving cattle over long distances. The wagon was equipped with a "chuck box" for storing cooking supplies, a water barrel, and space for firewood and personal items.



Food on a chuckwagon was simple and easy to preserve, including items like baked beans, salted meats, coffee, and sourdough biscuits. Fresh produce was typically unavailable, and fresh meat was only consumed if an animal was injured. The person in charge of the chuckwagon, known as the "cookie," was often second in authority on cattle drives, serving multiple roles, including cook, barber, and banker.

Today, chuckwagons are used in cooking competitions and cultural events to celebrate and preserve the heritage of the American cowboy. The American Chuck Wagon Association, founded in 1997, promotes these traditions by hosting cook-offs and maintaining a registry of authentic wagons. Chuckwagon suppers are also popular, especially in the Western United States and Canada, often held as part of trail rides or dude ranch experiences.



Owl Hollow Farm provides Ice Cream made by a Mule!

Our Athens Brand equine treadmill provides power and exercise.

Equine treadmills are used by:

Trainers- to train and exercise equine

Farmers- to keep equine in shape during the off-season

Universities- for exercise with ideal front and rear leg ratio

Back to basics or off grid folks - for the above reasons plus providing a source of power

These treadmills are designed with the stairs step tread on rollers, so as the mule/horse walks it turns the gears in the gearbox which turns a PTO shaft. That shaft runs to a 5 gallon ice cream churn or other equipment that you need power for; such as a washing machine, air compressor, wood splitter, hydraulic accessories, or even a generator.



Our horses and mules mostly enjoy walking on the treadmill. Sometimes if we stop it they will start pawing at the treadmill wanting to go again. Our mule named Jellybean really enjoys people watching while up on the treadmill and she will often let out a bray to talk to people passing by. People often ask how long it takes to make a batch of ice cream and it can vary from 20 to 30 minutes and an average exercise period for an equine on the treadmill is 45 minutes before a rest period. There are jacks on the front of the treadmill that give you the ability to increase the power provided by raising the front angle of the treadmill. The gearbox also has an adjustable speed Governor, lifetime seal web rollers, and heavy duty oil bath gear drivetrain. In addition to the power provided the exercise it provides is more uniform with the equine being in a straight line compared to round pen which puts a greater load on the inside legs.

Homesteading

Homesteading is a lifestyle centered on self-sufficiency, typically involving subsistence agriculture, food preservation, and small-scale production of textiles, clothing, and crafts for personal use or sale. It is practiced in various forms worldwide and throughout different historical eras, distinguished from

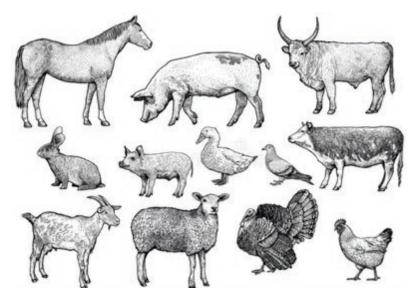
communal or village living by its relative isolation, both socially and physically.

In the United States, the term "homesteading" traces back to the Homestead Act of 1862, which aimed to promote national expansion by granting land to settlers willing to cultivate it. These expansion efforts often led to the displacement of Indigenous



peoples. Similar homesteading policies were implemented in Canada, Australia, and other regions, generally discontinued after achieving their intended goals or within specified time frames.

Modern homesteading incorporates sustainable practices like renewable energy use (solar and wind power) and the cultivation of heirloom vegetables and heritage livestock. Unlike traditional homesteading confined to rural areas, contemporary homesteading can also occur in urban or suburban settings, a practice known as urban homesteading. This form of homesteading combines small-scale sustainable agriculture with homemaking, reflecting a growing interest in self-sufficiency and environmental responsibility.



However, homesteading faces challenges, particularly from government regulations. Property taxes, building codes, food safety laws, zoning regulations, and local restrictions on landscaping and animal keeping can increase the frustration and costs associated with homesteading, making careful location selection essential for economic success.

Despite these obstacles, many find that homesteading provides a more satisfying and healthier lifestyle than conventional living. Its appeal lies in fostering a closer

connection to nature, promoting greater independence but creating a close-knit community, and enabling a simpler, more deliberate way of life.

Beekeeping

Beekeeping, or apiculture, is the practice of managing bee colonies, typically in artificial hives. Most beekeepers work with honey bees from the genus *Apis*, but other bees like stingless bees (*Melipona*) are also kept. Beekeepers, called apiarists, collect honey and other bee products such as beeswax, pollen, propolis, and royal jelly. They also provide services like crop pollination and selling queen bees or package bees. Bees are kept in an area called an apiary or "bee yard."

History of Beekeeping

Humans began keeping bees around 10,000 years ago. Early evidence includes a 5,500-year-old grave in Georgia containing jars of honey. Ancient Egyptian art from 4,500 years ago shows the use of hives and smoke to harvest honey, and beekeeping was practiced in ancient Greece, China, and by the Maya in Central America.

In ancient Egypt, hives were made from simple materials, and honey was stored in jars. The movable comb hive, developed in the 18th century, allowed honey harvesting



without harming the bees. Today, beekeeping is common for both small hobbyists and large-scale agricultural businesses.

Modern Beekeeping

In modern times, beekeeping is used for both honey production and crop pollination. Urban beekeeping has become popular because city bees often face fewer pesticides and benefit from a wide range of plants.

Ancient Practices Around the World

- **Egypt:** Beekeeping was well-established, with evidence showing the use of smoke to calm bees and honey being stored in jars.
- **Greece and Rome:** Beekeeping was highly valued, with tools like smoking pots and honey extractors found in archaeological digs.
- **China:** Beekeeping has been practiced for thousands of years, with written records highlighting the importance of well-constructed hives for honey quality.
- **Maya Civilization:** The Maya kept stingless bees, using them for honey production and even making a mead-like drink from it.

Beekeeping has been important in many cultures for thousands of years, providing honey, wax, and other valuable products while helping with the pollination of crops.

Equine Communication

WITH A BLINK AND A SIGH

What is your equine (horse, mule and donkey) friend telling you?

Many riders know how to properly sit in the saddle and guide their horses and mules through a lesson. Trainers know how to properly exercise, ride, feed and care for horses and mules, but how many owners and riders actually understand the language of a horse or mule? Too often a rider will declare his or her horse or mule to be obstinate, nippy or unresponsive without investigating the cause.

As prey animals, horses and mules do their best to mask any pain they are feeling to avoid catching the eye of a predator. Their natural instinct is survival and self-preservation. Therefore, it is important to understand the body language and facial reactions of horses and mules.

- 1. The Face The face tells us so much, especially the eyes.
 - a. Eyes Squeezing shut, fluttering and constant blinking (without the presence of a fly) are all indications that you have touched a sensitive area. You may see the same reaction if the horse or mule is being asked to perform or endure something that is painful, such as holding its head in the same position for a long time, wearing a saddle on a sore back or pulling a load that is too heavy. Most dressage horses have tension in their necks. Mules carry tension in their shoulders. If the eyes look fearful or worried, the horse or mule may be anticipating that you are going to hurt it, so ask yourself why. Soft relaxed eyes indicate a calm, relaxed horse or mule.
 - b. Nostrils Flaring nostrils that seem to be panting, indicate anger and/or pain when touched in a sensitive area.
 - c. Lips The lips will quiver when a sensitive spot is touched. Fluttering lips with a sigh is a release of tension. The head held high with lips curled back is a sure sign that love is in the air. Some horses will smack their lips when it is time to eat, which is quite amusing to witness. Mules lick their lips when they are content and glad to see you. Horse and Mules also lick their lips when they are thinking about a new task.
- 2. Ears There are pressure points behind the ears and eyes. Many horses hold tension at these pressure points and will jerk their head away when touched. Holding the halter and rubbing behind the eyes and ears will relieve the tension. When a horse or mule flattens back his ears, he is clearly telling you he is not happy. The direction of their ears tells you where their focus is. Mules are fun to watch, because their ears may be pointed in different directions. One ear could be facing you and the other ear could be turned away towards another sound.
- 3. Tail Hard swishing means a fly is bothering him or you are touching a painful area. If the latter is the case, you may get swatted in the face or kicked if the foot comes up at the same time. If the tail rises slightly up, the horse or mule is releasing gas and usually tension as well. If the tail goes all the way up, the horse or mule is about to poop. If a horse or mule is experiencing pain in its rear (aside from the person who won't leave him alone), he will clamp his tail tight against his rear in an attempt to block it from being touched. When a horse or mule is relaxed while standing, so is his tail.

- 4. Breathing When the horse or mule is breathing rapidly, he is excited or fearful. Full, rhythmic breathing that can be seen in his ribcage is good. This usually means the horse or mule is relaxed and may even be sleeping. Deep sighs are emitted when a horse or mule is releasing tension.
- 5. Body At times, a horse or mule will lean into you while being massaged or brushed, indicating he wants more. On the contrary, if a horse or mule backs away or continues to walk forward and back, he is avoiding being touched. A horse or mule that is adamant about keeping you at a distance will swing his rear around in an attempt to block or body-slam you. If you are near his shoulder, he will swing his head around to nip at you to warn you to back away. If all else fails, a good swift kick is a good deterrent. Pawing the ground is a sign of agitation or boredom.
- 6. Yummy Spots Everyone's favorite spot is the yummy spot! The horse or mule contorts his face, shakes his head and flaps his tongue, letting you know that you have found his favorite place to be rubbed or brushed.

Brushing a horse or mule is a good way to see how a horse is feeling. If a horse does not like being brushed, exchange the body brush for a face brush, because they are softer. If the horse still reacts, use your hands to feel along the mule or horse's body and notice if there are lumps, hot or cold spots or if the mule or horse reacts to being touched in a particular spot.

Unless your assistance is requested, please leave the horse or mule alone while he is being worked on by an equine care professional. While enjoying a relaxing massage, do you want someone talking in your face, hanging on you or showering you with kisses? How about if they want to shove a treat in your mouth? Allow the vet, farrier, chiropractor and massage therapist to have a calm and quiet experience with and for the horse or mule as they possibly can. If it is possible, establish a designated quiet space for individual horse and mule care.

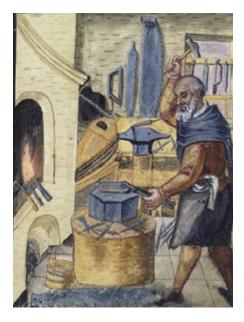
Horses and mules are highly sensitive and can pick up on your emotions. That is why horses are used for various types of therapy for humans. If you feel tense, anxious or agitated, take a few deep breaths before approaching a horse or mule so you will both have a more pleasant experience together.

BE AWARE BE SAFE BE CARING

Linda Bassani, Owner, Nuzzle and Chew Insured and Certified Equine Sports Massage Therapist Cell: 818-219-2387 Email: nuzzleandchew@gmail.com

Hendersonville, Tennessee

Blacksmithing



A blacksmith is a metalsmith who primarily works with wrought iron or steel to create objects by forging, which involves heating the metal and using tools like hammers, anvils, and chisels to shape it. Blacksmiths produce a wide variety of items such as gates, railings, furniture, sculptures, tools, agricultural implements, cooking utensils, weapons, and decorative or religious items. Historically, blacksmiths were distinguished from whitesmiths, who worked with finer metals like gold, silver, or pewter.

The term "blacksmith" comes from "black," referring to the black oxide (firescale) that forms on heated metal, and "smith," which originates from the Old English word *smið* meaning "skilled worker." Blacksmiths work in forges, often fueled by propane, natural gas, coal, or other materials. Modern blacksmiths may also use

blowtorches or induction heating.

The metal's color is crucial for determining its workability, changing from red to orange, yellow, and finally white as it heats. The ideal forging temperature is indicated by a bright yellow-orange color. Techniques in blacksmithing include forging, welding, heat-treating, and finishing. Forging is distinct from machining because it reshapes metal without removing material, and common operations include drawing down, bending, upsetting, swaging, punching, and forge welding.



Blacksmiths historically played a key role in crafting and repairing a wide range of items, from simple nails to complex armor and weapons.

Schedule of Events

Schedule Subject to Change.

Please check the website for the most up to date information while at the festival! https://www.americanmuleandbluegrassfestival.com/schedule

Sept 25 Thursday

Entertainment:

10 am to 2 pm Wagon Train located near Champions Arena

5pm Fish Fry in the Hall of Fame Room

5pm Steve Hall and Friends Hall of Fame Room

Sept 26 Friday

10 am Craft Show: Cooper Steel Arena

10 am Jr Mule Skinner Program for Homeschoolers and Public: Champions Arena

10 am Steve Edward Mulemanship Champions Arena

Homestead Speakers: Hall of Fame Room

1 pm "Dairy on the Homestead" with Tiffany Jones from Silly Goat Farm

3 pm "Basic Animal Care for the Homestead" with Dr. Jordan DVM, TennSouth Veterinary Services

Competition: Cooper Steel Area

10 am American Mule and Music Association Gaited Mule Show

4 pm North American Saddle Mule and Donkey Show

Entertainment: Hall of Fame Room

5pm GrassKickers

Sept 27 Saturday

10 am Craft Show: Cooper Steel Arena

10 am Steve Edward Mulemanship Clinic Champions Arena

Homestead Speakers: Hall of Fame Room

10 am "Natural Medicine" with Tiffany Jones from Silly Goat Farm

12:30 pm "Homesteading 101" with Sarah Burton from Sabbaticus Farm

Competition

8 am American Mule and Bluegrass American Donkey Association Mini Donkey Show Champions Arena

9 am North American Saddle Mule and Donkey Show Cooper Steel Arena

12:30 pm Cast Iron Cook Off Judging Champions Arena

2 pm Cutest Cowboy and Cowgirl Competition Hall of Fame Room

3 pm Mule and Draft Pulling Champions Arena

6 pm American Mule and Music Association Gaited Mule Show Cooper Steel Arena

7 pm Fastest Mule Race Cooper Steel Arena

7:15 pm Mule Drawing Cooper Steel Arena

Entertainment: Hall of Fame Room

11 am James Stembridge Family Band

3 pm Noelle Goodin

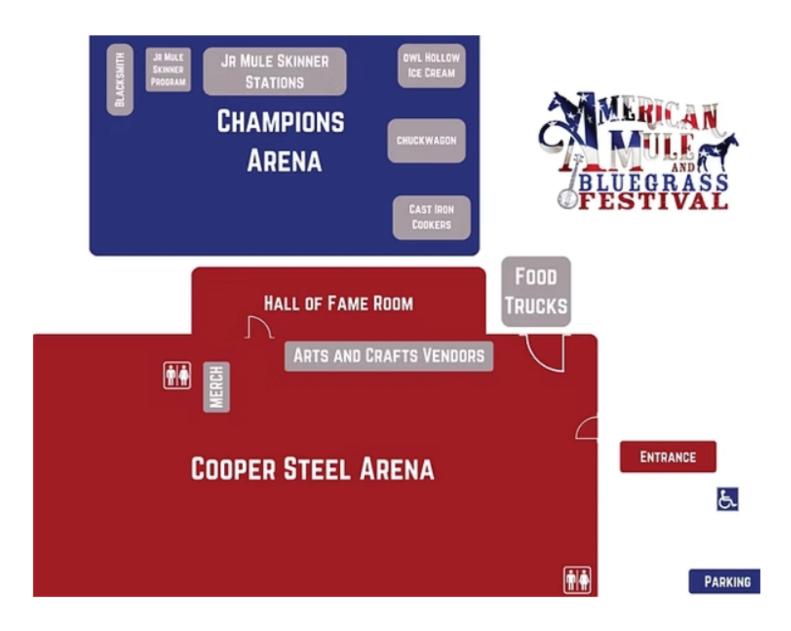
5pm Stones River Bluegrass Band

Schedule of Events

Sept 28 Sunday

9 am Pancake Breakfast Hall of Fame Room 10 am Worship Service Hall of Fame Room 11 am Church Service Hall of Fame Room

Located at 721 Whitthorne St. • Shelbyville, TN 37160



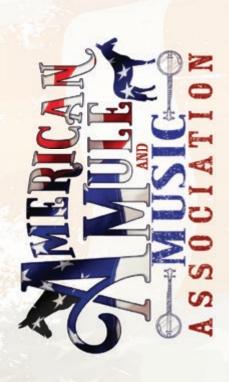


American Donkey Association

Our mission is to Expand Donkey Activities and Shows, help Educate and share our Knowledge with others, Encourage enthusiasts to Strive towards Experiencing the best that these Equines have to Offer, and to Promote the Welfare of the Breeds... all because of our shared love for The Donkey. Did you know that French Poitou Donkeys and the American Mammoth Jackstock Donkeys are on the Critically **Endangered List? Or that Miniature Donkeys** are on the Watchlist for becoming Endangered? Watch the video below, to see what the American Donkey Association is doing to get people more involved with these beautiful breeds.







FRIED CATE OF COMPINE SKINNED

PARTICIPANT

Jarry Jav





SATURDAY | SEPT 28 | 2:30 PM



Age groups: 1-5 and 6-12
Farrer Construction Stage
Family Center
Be ready at tent beside
stage at 2:15pm!

Sponsored by Libbie Whitson

American Mule and Bluegrass Festival 2025 Sponsors



HERITAGE GROUP







FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS













Hollow Point Lodge Baum Equine Services
Adams and Floyd Electrical and Plumbing
Sandy Gordon Libbie Whitson Rachel Arnold



Bring your parents tomorrow and get

55 0FF

Present this voucher at the gate to get \$5 off one ticket for Friday Sept. 27th or Saturday Sept. 28th