

Russell Farm Supervisor: Report Recap of 2022

Special Events: Participants – 5,402

Our events draw families from our community of all ages. Most all our events include an opportunity to engage with a hands on experience in art, nature, and history.

Easter Egg Hunt: Ages 4 and under. Children enjoy hunting eggs, pictures with the Easter Bunny as well as take a picture with the Russell Farm donkeys. This is a free event.

Autism Awareness Event: Partnered with Austin Autism Adventures to offer a circus themed event. The farm was full of activities to challenge those with special needs with prizes at each booth. This was a free event.

Arbor Day: Service project with a group of 20 volunteers planted 5 fruit trees and planted flowers to beautify the front of the Russell Boren home. Master Gardeners had a booth set up to educate those who attended about gardening in Texas. Red Chair Art Lecture speaker covered historical trees around the United States. A bird walking tour was offered that day on the nature trails of the farm. This was a free event.

10 Year Anniversary Celebration: A ceremony was held to honor the Boren family who donated Russell Farm 30 acres to the City of Burleson in 2012. Members from our City Council and Mayor attended the event and personally thanked Mrs. Boren and her daughter.

Texas Heritage Festival: This is our 5th annual event where we celebrate the heritage of Texas Farming in the early days of Burleson. Visitors enjoy a hayride, old time traditional music, arts and crafts. Chuck wagons and cowboys are there to demonstrate what life was like on the trail with outdoor cooking and teaching roping. This was a free event.

Watermelon Day: The farm offered watermelon to all our visitors along with a chance to cool off in a kiddy pool and run through water sprinklers. This was in conjunction with July and National Parks and Recreation month. This was a free event.

AG Day: We partner with the Johnson County Agriculture Extension department, Centennial and Burleson High School FFA (Future Farmers of America) in order to offer third grade students a hands-on experience learning about where food comes from and how to care for animals. FFA students bring cows, sheep, goats, chickens, rabbits for their presentations. Southwest Mobile Dairy attends AG Day and offers milking demonstrations. This was a free event.

Fall Fest: This is an evening event where we offer hayrides as the sunsets on the nature trails of the farm. A mechanical bull, train rides, arts and crafts are some of the activities our guest get to enjoy. This is a free event.

Date Night Experience: Russell Farm Art Center hosted its first date night experience event. The event maxed out with 35 registered couples. We plan to continue offering the event seasonally.

Far Out Family Camp Out: Families enjoy the peacefulness of the farm environment. Master Naturalist lead a nature walk in the back of the trails. The stock pond is open for a fishing experience. Cook out, fishing, playing Bingo for prizes, a movie and much more!

Breakfast with Santa: The farm host this event for the Burleson Recreation Center. Tickets are sold for this breakfast. Families get a full pancake breakfast, a picture with Santa, fun activities and visit from area school choirs singing Christmas Carols.

Nights of Lights: The farm stays open extended hours for 4 days till 8:00 pm to provide a holiday experience for our community to enjoy the beauty of the Christmas lights while sipping on a free cup of cocoa. A fire pit and live Christmas music makes the evening a fun place for visitors. This is a free event.

Christmas on the Farm: Live music throughout the day including a BISD Elementary choir, Christmas play by Kerr Middle School, The Buttermilk Junction, and Texas Traditions Chorus. Hayrides are a favorite on the back nature trails of the farm. A Native American hiding in the woods comes out to greet the passing hayride. Musicians also in the woods to entertain those passing by on the hayride. The Chesapeake building is shared by vendors and free arts and crafts for families to make together. Our focus is for families to experience an old fashion Christmas when attending our event. This is a free event.

Programs and Activities: Participants 3,008

We offer a wide range of classes that provides hands on experience with nature, history and art.

Open Art every Saturday from 9:00 – 12:00 pm. Artist brings their own supplies to paint or sketch. There is a still life set up each week with a different theme.

Steve Ross Painting Workshop: Participants came from as far as Hawaii, Oregon, California, in addition to various cities in Texas such as Austin, Houston, and San Antonio. This program had 208 participants take the art workshop with Steve Ross.

Science Classes were added this fall of 2022 for youth as well as adults offered through Full Steam Ahead LLC.

Archery classes were offered weekly through spring and summer 2022 and will return this spring of 2023.

Field trips to the farm from BISD schools as well as private schools, and senior centers.

The Russell Boren Home is open for tours every first Saturday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm except for Christmas on the farm is the second Saturday in December. Docents tell stories of the 135 years that this farm was in one family. The home is full of antiques that visitors can learn about how they were used in the early days of the farm.

Canning Classes once a month on Saturdays have been a great hit! Friendships have been formed and many repeat customers. Most all classes reach the limited spaces and had to a waitlist. Since all supplies are included people like to just show up can with others and leave with their very own jam, pickles, or salsa to take home. This class offers an opportunity for people to learn together so that they can go home and teach others.

Summer Camps:

Fun on the Farm Camp is offered for ages 6-8 years old and 9 to 12. Children learn about fishing, donkey care such as grooming, feeding, and leading them around the farm, nature hikes as well as an art project.

Horse Camp was a new camp being offered in June. We had 20 campers learn proper safety standards, how to groom, saddle and ride a horse. Support came from the Johnson County 4-H Horse project volunteers. The camp ended with a nature trail ride through the back woods of the farm. This camp had a waitlist that we were not able to fit into our camp.

Art Camps was held three weeks in July both ages 6-11 and a teen art camp.

Art Camp for Adults was offered all day on a Saturday in August.

Workshops:

A three part series of wood carving class was offered in the fall of 2022 and will return in the spring 2023.

Herbal workshop was offered by the Native Prairie Association in spring of 2022 and will return in 2023.

Arborist Jason Attwood did a workshop in May of 2022 covering topics of the proper way to take care of different types of trees.

Gardening Workshops offered by the Johnson County Master Gardeners through out the spring and summer. Topics included container gardening, how to build a container garden, seasonal planting, installing of irrigation drip system for vineyard, how to get information from the Texas A&M website.

Private Rentals: 4,263 participants

Russell Farm offers two building to host your special occasions such as wedding, birthday parties, graduations, company picnics, and banquets.

Chesapeake building is 1,800 square feet with capacity to host 100 guests it is climate controlled and has a private restroom inside. All tables, chairs are included.

Hay Barn a rustic three-sided barn can seat 40 guests with a private restroom, parking behind the barn for easy access.

Operational Projects Recap 2022

Dairy Barn: This building housed tools, paints, repair items, and was used as a workshop area. Inside was a supply closet that housed all kinds of supplies such as light bulbs, trash can liners, and cleaning supplies. This building is now reserved as an art gallery for only Charlie Boren's Art sculptures. Replaced wood on the walls, removed Jacuzzi tub that at one time was used from the previous owner Charlie Boren. Poured new concrete in the supply closet after removing the tub, sanded and refinished walls. This is now a mini art gallery of Charlie Boren's relief carvings. Added special lighting in gallery spaces. Added a ramp for handicap accessibility at the back entrance of the Dairy Barn.

Wood Shop: The west end of the Baker building had a room that housed some tools, but mostly items that had been kept there for years which had not benefit to the farm. Foundation was repaired in 2021 in hopes that one day this space would serve as a wood shop. 2022 removed all items, refinished the walls, and added shelving. Relocated the tool boxes and tools that were housed in the Dairy Barn to the new wood shop area. Replaced an old tarp that served as a door for years with a custom made sliding barn door. The labor of this door was donated by a volunteer of the farm. This now completes our new space called the wood shop where we can offer classes and repairs that need to be done for the farm on a daily basis.

Chesapeake Building: The farm was in need for additional classroom space. A wall with 4 sliding barn doors was added to offer two classes at the same time. This can be opened to offer a large space when needed. Fresh paint on all walls and cabinets inside. A handicap ramp was added to the entrance of the Chesapeake building.