

SHARPY THE MAMMOTH DONKEY

Star of the Guilford Fair

Kimberly Brockett, Michael Cappelli, and their son Drew came to Guilford 23 years ago, and wanted to have a farm. Having grown up on a dairy farm, and having had horses as a child, Kim wanted to have horses again, and in 2008, the family established Tripledale Farm. Drew, at aged ten picked up a book at the Guilford Library about disappearing breeds of domesticated animals, where they discovered Mammoth Donkeys, and having never heard of them, researched extensively all the information they could find.

The America Mammoth Jackstock was developed early in the history of the United States, and is an important part of American agricultural history. George Washington, among others, was a leading agricultural innovator focused on the improvement of livestock. In the late 1700s and early 1800s many of the European strains of donkeys were either purchased or gifted to Washington and others, and the quality and size of donkeys bred using these animals far surpassed what had been able to be produced domestically. Andalusian Jack's as well as Maltese



Tripledale Farm of Guilford keeps Mammoth Donkeys, an endangered domestic breed, including the beloved Sharpy (right)

(Photo courtesy Tripledale Farm)

Jack's and the Catalonian ass from Spain were imported throughout the 1800s blending the different strains, and broadening the genetic base of the breed.

Mammoth Jacks are sturdy and tall, with large heads and especially long ears. Black was originally considered to be the only color that was acceptable for Jacks, however recently sorrel has become more favored. The historic function of the American Mammoth Jack was primarily for breeding mules, but also as draft and riding donkeys, although today they are more likely to be used for recreation or agricultural work.

As Kim and her family's love for these donkeys grew, they decided that they would be a perfect addition to their farm, where they could stay and live out their lives as part of the family. The family decided that most people know about disappearing wildlife, but are unaware

of endangered breeds of domesticated animals, and strove to raise awareness about the situation facing Mammoth donkeys. They researched breeders in Oklahoma and Tennessee, and picked out donkeys to bring to their farm, starting out with two, and now have five. Sharpy came from an Oklahoma breeder via a farm in Connecticut, where he was unhappy being with horses and mules. Donkeys are very social animals and need to be with other donkeys, so they are not their best and happiest solely being kept with other livestock. Now Sharpy, and the family's other donkeys like to be around humans, with whom they tend to bond. They are typically very intelligent and easy to train, and have the personalities that more resemble a big dog, the added attraction being that they are a big dog that you can ride.

In 2021, the United States Postal Service introduced a series of stamps de-

picting Heritage Breeds of livestock, including the Mammoth Donkey. The USPS wanted to "pay homage to the priceless genetic diversity of heritage breeds with 10 different Forever stamps showcasing these unusual and culturally valuable animals".

Kim and her family at Tripledale Farm now make it their purpose to educate and inform others about the situation that Mammoth donkeys face as an endangered breed. Their goal is the same, whether it be a child excited about meeting a Mammoth donkey at school, or a demonstration at a more formal institution, they are facilitating and spreading the story of Mammoth donkeys, and helping to save this extraordinary breed.

Kim is a member of the Board of the Guilford Agricultural Society, and this year will bring Sharpy to the Guilford Fair in September.



Above: The Flying Wallendas
Right: Laurie Lee Fancy Horseback Riding
(Photos by Larry Kalbfeld, courtesy Guilford Fair)

AND DO NOT MISS...



All ages will delight in the free Guilford Fair Circus featuring the popular The Flying Wallendas with the acrobatic Cortes Flying Trapeze Family in the center ring and Laurie Lee Fancy Horseback Riding.

Check guilfordfair.org for showtimes. □



Sept. 15, 16, 17, 2023

GUILFORD FAIR

All 3 Days

**The Guilford Fair
Family Circus**

featuring
The Flying Wallendas

Zoo Show

Pig Races

Childrens

Zoo

Agricultural
Exhibits
Competitions

Rides

Food

Fun

**Friday
Night**

ZBTB

Zac Brown
Tribute Band

**Saturday
Night**

**The Lords of
52nd Street**

A Tribute to Billy Joel

STONEHOUSE LANE ★ GUILFORD, CONN.

Visit us online at: www.guilfordfair.org



