

There's a unicorn coming to the Farmer's Market in Alton - yep, you read that right

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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ALTON – Rainbow Sparkles, the unicorn, comes but once a year to Alton, and he makes his appearance at the Alton Farmers and Artisans Market every October, when the climate is cool enough for unicorns to be at their best.

“He comes to Alton once a year, and he doesn't tell us where he lives,” Dave Nunnally, the keeper of Rainbow Sparkles and co-proprietor of It's Raining Zen, said Wednesday. “His whole goal is to bring joy and cheer to the children of Alton.”

When it is not the night before and the morning of his visit to the market, Rainbow Sparkles spends his life as a Palamino American Quarter Horse named Salty. Like all of the Nunnallies' animals, Salty was a rescue. He came from a stable in Tennessee in which Nunnally kept another of he and his wife, Donna's, horses. Salty was actually owned by a young woman whose life was getting in the way of proper care for the horse. Nunnally said he gave her enough to get a camera for a college class and he received Salty – who is now very loved and receives a great amount of care.

“He loves coming out to the farmer's market,” Nunnally said. “He loves being around people, and he gets all the apples, carrots and peppermints he can eat.”

Parents take note: Rainbow Sprinkles the Unicorn loves apples, carrots and peppermints.

Nunnally said this weekend, Oct. 13, 2018, will be Rainbow Sparkles's second trip to Alton. He said the unicorn takes over Salty sometime the previous evening before leaving to parts unknown sometime before dawn the next day.

The unicorn was brought to the farmer's market through a partnership between Nunnally and Alton Main Street. Nunnally said Alton Main Street's Executive Director Sara McGibany and her dedicated team of volunteers bring a lot of fun and unique ideas to Alton, and he is happy to contribute any way he can as both a community member and a local small business owner.

On Facebook, McGibany summed up the collective thought most free-spirited Riverbend residents may have upon hearing a unicorn (with a golden horn and sparkly purple hooves) will be in town this weekend:

“If your weekend plans don't include feeding apples to a unicorn then you might want to re-prioritize your life,” she posted.