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## 2010 Spirit of the Horse Art Exhibit A wonderful ESS Event!



By Ruth Bourgeois

The third annual Spirit of the Horse Art Exhibit was held Feb. 12-14 at the Stables Gallery. This year's event featured fine equine art, a silent auction with lots of great donations, and raffle basket of Valentine's Day chocolates from the Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory and roses. The miniature donkeys Bindy and Marley, along with ESS's rescue horse Mateo, met lots of visitors at this year's event. THANK YOU, everyone, who helped make this year's show a success!

Exhibitors this year were: Tony Manzo, Lenny Foster, Dora McQuaid, Valerie Graves, Sandy Miller, DeAnn Hall, Kim Treiber, Ursula Jorch, Bill Hudson, Doug

Scott, John Farnsworth, and Maggie Rankin.

The silent auction featured items donated by these wonderful artists and businesses: Stakeout Grill & Bar, Joseph's Table, Ranchos Plaza Grill, Graham's Grill, Antonio's Restaurant, Ed Sandoval, Sheena Cameron, Walden Fine Art Gallery, Stephen Spellman, Robert Turgeon, Valerie Graves, Anthony J. Manzo, Sandra Miller, Lance Green, Farnsworth Gallery, Kristi Benson, The Taos Gallery, Village Shop, Connie Bernie Romero, Leonard Stroud, Diane Dau, Spotted Bear - Hanna Jackson & Danne Hanlon, Sue Green, The Green Bay Packers, The Milwaukee Brewers, Jessie Martin, and Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory.



Ruth, Bindy, Ed Sandoval and Drew Gillum from Oklahoma City, OK. Drew purchased the "From the Woodpile" oil on canvas painting donated by Ed Sandoval to the ESS silent auction.

## NARHA Program Starts Soon!



By Laureana Miera

Equine Spirit Sanctuary is pleased to announce the start of a therapeutic riding program beginning this spring under the direction of a North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) instructor, Georgia Smith. ESS will now be able to offer therapeutic riding for persons with disabilities.

NARHA is an organization that provides Equine Assisted Activity and Therapy to individuals with disabilities through a network of nearly 800 member centers.

Founded in 1969, NARHA's mission is to "change and enrich lives by promoting excellence in equine assisted activities." One way this is accomplished is by the most stringent rules and safety precautions. So that each person they assist gets as much out of therapy as possible, NARHA requires that each instructor is

specially trained and that they adhere to many policies - including the new, fully-accredited instructor. Many safety precautions must be followed by the participants, as well. One of these includes the wearing of proper safety equipment at all times. With these guidelines, one can feel assured that the therapy being provided will be as beneficial as possible.

Equine Assisted Therapy, including Therapeutic Horseback Riding, can greatly assist those with many types of disabilities - mental or physical. Some of these include: Muscular Dystrophy, Cerebral Palsy, Visual Impairment, Down Syndrome, Mental Retardation, Autism, Multiple Sclerosis, Spina Bifida, Emotional Disabilities, Brain Injuries, Spinal Cord Injuries, Amputations, Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder, Deafness, and Cardiovascular accident/Stroke victims.

Horseback riding challenges the body and mind, so when practiced regularly, it can strengthen the body and improve coordination. Because of this, individuals who have difficulty ambulating can be strengthened and may be able to walk more easily. Also, being in the presence of a horse can work wonders. Those participating in therapy (mainly Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy) that are introverted and withdrawn may become more outgoing, those dealing with anxiety or depression may receive improved mental well-being, or individuals with Autism may receive improvements in their symptoms.

The initial inspiration for the foundation of ESS was to assist those with disabilities through horse-related activities and therapy. Now this vision is coming to fruition! The program will be held one day a week starting out.

**ESS - A Helping, Healing Hand for Horses and People**



# Introducing ESS Volunteer Sue Green

By Laureana Miera

Sue Green has been a volunteer at Equine Spirit Sanctuary since the summer of 2008. As impressive as the amount of time she has devoted at ESS is, the amount of time she has been passionate about horses is even greater. Sue has loved horses since she was a small child. She has turned this love into something wonderful - not only for ESS, but for the community and herself. Volunteering time, talents or resources provides a feeling that is greater than most. So, essentially, giving to others gives back to oneself.

We hope that the following interview with Sue will help to provide some useful background information, as well as inspiration to turn a personal interest or passion into something positive for the community!

*1. What piqued your interest in horses?*

Sue: I was two years old when I sat on my first pony. He was a black and white paint touring the neighborhood. Yet these many years later, I still love being around horses - painted or not.

*2. How and when did you decide to volunteer at ESS?*

Sue: Shortly after moving to Taos, a friend



at St. James Episcopal church introduced me to one of her friends who volunteered at ESS. On my first visit to the facility on Cuchilla Road, I was impressed with the work Ruth was doing rehabilitating horses and people. I wanted to contribute to the growth I saw taking place there.

*3. What are some of the activities you do when volunteering?*

Sue: I'm a very versatile volunteer: muck out stalls, clean and fill water tanks, grounds maintenance, cleaning tack, grooming and ground work with horses, dump runs and helping in fund raising efforts.

*4. What is your favorite aspect of volunteering?*

Sue: Being involved with the horses,

themselves. Each has a personality and special needs.

*5. What is some of your "horsey" background?*

Sue: Well, as I said, I started at two years old. I rode my uncle's mules and horses on his farm in Virginia. I trail rode with my friends as a teenager. Sometime later, I became involved in showing horses - Tennessee Walkers and Hunters and Jumpers. These activities led to my 'riding to the hounds' in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. I've participated in a cattle drive in Utah and Arizona and rode with a safari in Kenya.

*6. What are some of the things you enjoy- horse related or otherwise?*

Sue: My interests include landscaping and gardening, staying active with Juan Tomas Hounds in southern New Mexico, volunteering at Stray Hearts, exploring the beautiful state we live in, and taking care of my mom and our three cats.

*7. What are some of the things you see occurring in ESS' future?*

Sue: Continuing and expanding our efforts with ARC and other horse therapy programs. Equally as important, helping make the community more aware of the benefits horses provide.

## How You Can Help

Volunteers are always needed to help with horse care, special events, programs, office work, gardening, cleaning, painting, feeding, fund raising. Whatever your interest, we have work you can do! Call or email to learn more.

We need help on the days that we are open to the public, currently Wednesday and Saturday. Summer days are Tuesday,

Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday.

New volunteer orientation and training is held the second Saturday of every month from 9 to 11 a.m.

Our equines all need sponsors. Their ongoing needs include feed, hoof care, basic veterinary care, supplies. You can sponsor an ESS program horse for \$150 per month, or a donkey for \$75 per month.

Any and all donations are greatly appreciated. You can do a partial sponsorship or a regular contribution towards the sponsorship.

We appreciate donations of equipment or supplies. We need things like muck buckets and cleaning supplies, and stall mats.

Check the ESS website for details for other supplies that are needed.



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# Meet the ESS Directors: Ruth Bourgeois

By Laureana Miera

In order to come to know the true purpose of Equine Spirit Sanctuary, we feel that it's important to tell about the person who originally founded it, and is still very much involved in everything that makes this organization functional: Ruth Bourgeois. Ruth Bourgeois is the devoted and knowledgeable director of Equine Spirit Sanctuary. She takes on much of the responsibility of all things ESS-related; behind the scenes and front and center (although volunteers help tremendously!). Whether it's ordering hay for the week for the horses, taking an active part in the many activities that occur there (such as being involved when a group or organization comes to visit), or printing out numerous flyers for the next ESS event, Ruth rarely sees a dull moment.

It is hoped that the following questions and answers will help to provide information not only about the foundation of Equine Spirit Sanctuary, but also about the founder and her vision for assisting the community.

*1. What sparked your interest in horses?*

Ruth: From the time I was a small child I was fascinated with and in love with horses, and always dreamed of having one of my own.

*2. Was there a particular moment in which you decided to become the founder of an equine rescue organization or was it a gradual desire that occurred?*

Ruth: I attended a lecture on NARHA when I was in my early 20s, and was so inspired by the concept of how horses can help the handicapped, I made up my mind that someday I was going to be a part of a program like this. After many years of working in the horse industry, I became involved in horse rescue. I also spent a lot of time working with kids and horses, training, showing and competing. I discovered a common thread amongst all these activities and realized how much horses bring to our lives, and this led to a vision and desire to bring the various aspects of horses, horse activities and people together for the good of all involved.

*3. How and when was ESS established?*

Ruth: ESS was founded in 2005. I moved to Taos in 2000, with this vision in mind. Taos is a perfect setting for healing for horses

and people.

*4. What is your purpose for running ESS?*  
Ruth: To provide a setting in which all aspects of horse/human connection can be realized.

*5. What qualifications and/or experience do you have to run ESS?*

Ruth: I have an AA Degree in Horse Husbandry and several years of work in the horse industry including taking care of thoroughbreds and working at Spruce Meadows in Calgary, Alberta. I've worked for horse breeders, veterinarians and trainers. I was an active competitive trail rider and editor of the NATRC (North American Trail Ride Conference) newsletter for 13 years. I've managed shows and competitive trail rides and was the Commissioner of the Iowa Games Equestrian Venue, a three-day, three event show with an average of 100 horse/rider teams and 90 to 100 volunteers. I was active in horse rescue work with the Iowa Federation of Humane Societies prior to moving to Taos. I served in various positions on boards of horse organizations, including Secretary of the Iowa Horse Council, and was a founding member of the Iowa Trail Riders Association and Iowa Equestrian Trails Council. Also was a registered lobbyist in Iowa for horse concerns.

*6. What is your favorite aspect of running ESS?*

Ruth: Being able to share the horses with people and seeing the enjoyment they bring to the lives of others.

*7. What are some things that you enjoy (horse-related or not)?*

Ruth: Taos – this beautiful land, the mountains, the incredible beauty of the area and the people.

*8. What are some of your hopes and dreams- both personal and for ESS?*

My biggest dream, personally and professionally, is to see ESS continue to grow, to see more people involved in the management and growth of the organization, to where it is solid enough that I can step back and simply enjoy watching the magic of the activities happen, and to know that ESS will continue to grow even if I am not a part of it.

*10. How can others assist in helping to achieve these hopes and dreams?*

Show up! Volunteer your time, your talents and your resources to help ESS grow. Support ESS financially so that we can continue to provide the services we now offer and more.

There you go! We hope that this interview was helpful in letting you get to know Ruth on a more personal basis. In addition, we hope that it helped to bring awareness on how you can help Ruth's ultimate dreams come to fruition. When time, talents or resources are donated, not only does one help ESS, but they assist the community. That is the true purpose for ESS.

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## Comedy Benefits the Animals

ESS is one of the recipients of proceeds raised from Marc Kaplan's monthly comedy nights. He started these as fundraisers for local animal group nonprofits. We decided to use our money for postage and paper for the newsletter. The next comedy night is Friday, April 30, 8 p.m. at the Don Fernando Hotel.

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## New Newsletter Format!

In an effort to improve our communication and let people know what's happening at ESS, we are now going to publish a regular newsletter. Each issue will feature an ESS activity, a volunteer, a director or staff person, an ESS horse, an ESS sponsor, a participant of one of our programs, and calendar.

The newsletters will be printed here in the ESS on our wonderful new (well, new to us!) laser printer that prints 11x17 sized paper. A PDF version, with color photos, will be posted on the web site.

The email communications will now be used more for announcements, rather than full newsletters.

These newsletters are made possible by some great ESS supporters. Laureana Miera is helping write articles for the newsletters. ESS volunteer Su Maya has been helping out in the office, bringing our mailing list up to date.

Thanks, everyone, for your continued support!

Ruth Bourgeois



## ESS Featured Program Participant: Mike

Mike Gurule is a client that has been coming to ESS from the Arc. Mike has been working with the horses at ESS since the summer of 2008.

Mike began by learning to brush Bindy, the donkey, and soon was grooming Kat and Mandy as well. He enjoys walking with the horses, and now does leading exercises.

Mike is now part of a small group that comes to ESS for an hour every week to participate in the equine assisted growth and learning activities, which include arena work, grooming, and all aspects of horse care, including feeding and clean-up.



Mike leading Kat over ground poles.



## Featured ESS Horse: Comet

By Laureana Miera

**Breed:** Andalusian / Quarter Horse x

**When Comet arrived at Equine Spirit Sanctuary:** January 2006

**Reason for coming to ESS:** Comet's owner didn't have a purpose for her, so she was donated. Comet also had hind leg lameness issues when she arrived.

**Comet's personality and disposition:** Most likely due to the injury she sustained that caused some of her lameness issues, she can be excitable and anxious at times. However, the majority of the time, Comet is friendly, well mannered, gentle, and likes people. She enjoys being groomed and receiving lots of attention and treats.

**Comet's hoped-for outcome:** The ultimate goal is to find the perfect owner for her - one who is knowledgeable and experienced enough to appreciate her. However, if Comet remains at ESS, the next goal is for her to become a lesson horse for advanced riders.



Comet

**How you can help:** Comet's primary need at the time is to complete some of her training. She is currently green-broke, so an advanced rider would be useful in achieving some of this training.

Comet is a beautiful, gentle, people-loving horse. With the adequate resources and training, there is no limit to the potential that can be unlocked!

[www.equinespiritsanctuary.org](http://www.equinespiritsanctuary.org)

### ESS Mission Statement

*The Equine Spirit Sanctuary is a non-profit, volunteer-based healing center that believes in responsible horse ownership. ESS is dedicated to the safety and welfare of all equines and through a program of rescue, rehabilitation, relocation or permanent retirement, and education, serves to establish a connection between equines and humans.*

## ESS Calendar

### SATURDAY, APRIL 10 - 10 to 4 Baylee's B'day and Spring Cleanup

Volunteers are needed to help with general cleanup, fence repair. Plus - we'll be celebrating Baylee's third birthday! Call or email for more info.

### SUNDAY, APRIL 25 - 5 to 7 p.m. Workshop about Health and Healing

Benefits of pure therapeutic grade essential oils. Guest speaker Diania DeCant. Sponsored by Enchanted Dream Foundation. \$5 donation at the door, proceeds to benefit ESS therapeutic riding program. Location: Taos Artist Co-op, 226 Paseo del Pueblo Norte, Taos. Light dinner fare served, door prizes.

### FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 8 p.m. Comedy benefit for the Animals

Don Fernando Hotel. Doors open at 7:30.

### TUESDAYS

Volunteers are needed from 9 to 11 a.m. to help clean the barn, turn out and groom horses. Arc, 11 a.m. to noon. Volunteers are needed to work with four clients from the Arc who do grooming and horse handling exercises. Tuesday is also the day that the therapeutic riding program will be held. Volunteer training will begin soon.

### WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS

ESS open days. Volunteers needed from 9 to 11 a.m. to help with cleaning and horse care.

### ESS Directors:

Ruth Bourgeois    Beth Robinson  
Mark Eden        Sarah Reeb  
Sandra Miller

### Advisory:

Ruben Baca        Dr. Doug Thal  
Andras Vargas

### Newsletter:

Editor - Ruth Bourgeois  
Assistant Editor - Laureana Miera