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## November 2018

Dear ESS Friends,

As this year winds down, it is once again time to celebrate a year of horses and activities at Equine Spirit Sanctuary, while kicking off this festive season with our annual Holiday Horse Party.

It's been a year of many challenges and many accomplishments. We started off the ride season mourning the loss of our beloved therapy horse, Dustee. I had raised Dustee from a baby and had him in my life for 29 incredibly wonderful years. The past 10 years countless other people came to love my beautiful horse here at ESS. It was tough losing this dear friend, and even the other horses seemed to share in our loss as well. Kat stepped up as the number one therapeutic riding horse, along with Elvis. We introduced Lady as a lesson horse and over the summer months she surprised and delighted us with her patient, calm attitude. We did fewer lessons this year, but maintained the high standards and quality of every lesson for each of our special needs riders.

We did more equine-assisted therapy and learning activities, working with clients from Tri County's ACT program and Shadow Mountain addictions treatment center. We also had visits with Tri County's psyche social rehab group prior to the closing down of Tri County.

In June we hosted a two-day clinic with Dr. Tomas Teskey on holistic horse care and management. The clinic covered all aspects of horse health, including hoof trimming and dentistry. One of the outcomes of this clinic was to build a track system, combining one of the horse turnouts with the donkeys and mini's turnout. The purpose of the track system is to encourage the horses to move more, resulting in fitter, trimmer horses. It's been interesting to see how the horses, donkeys and mini's took to the track. We have seen improvements in condition as they do indeed move more and it's nice to see how the donkeys and little equines have begun to mingle with the bigger horses rather than keeping to themselves.

Thanks to some wonderful new volunteers and to the guys from Shadow Mountain and also AmeriCorps volunteers, we have gotten many much needed repairs and facility maintenance projects done this year.

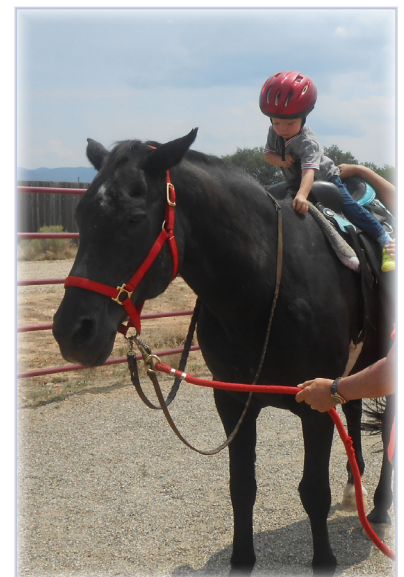


*Remembering Dustee  
1989-2018*



*Elvis with  
a first  
time rider.*

*Our new  
garden /  
break area.*





And thanks to a grant from the Taos Garden Club, we now have a beautiful little garden area down by the track with big tubs of flowers, picnic tables, an outdoor bench and chairs, and a bridge over the acequia. This project was completed with the assistance of many volunteers and a group of kids that are home-schooled who are at ESS one day a week.

Our mission at ESS is to improve the lives of both horses and humans. One of our biggest goals is to educate and inform. At a class that I took recently a question was posed, "how do I find my authentic voice?" The instructor's response was simple: "You find your voice by using your voice on behalf of someone who doesn't have one." I thought about how this relates to the work we do at ESS. I realized that no matter what is going on in the world around us, no matter what losses we suffer, what joys we experience, what accomplishments we achieve, this is what keeps us going. ESS is an authentic voice for horses and for people as well. We feel very blessed to have a safe place of hope and healing for those without a voice.

Please join us for our annual Holiday Horse Party on Saturday, November 24 from 11 to 3. Bring your family and friends and meet our wonderful horses and donkeys, the volunteers, and enjoy our decorated barn and holiday refreshments. There will be the usual sale of gift certificates donated by local merchants, bake sale, and arts and crafts. Weather permitting, there will be free pony rides for the kids and a grooming corral with the mini donkeys to pet and brush.

We are grateful for your support and friendship. If you are in the Taos area, come out and visit us when you can.

*Best wishes for the coming year, from all of us at Equine Spirit Sanctuary,*

*Ruth Bourgeois*

*Ruth Bourgeois, Exec. Director*



*Two of our mini's, Sally and Rosie.*



*Bindy, our sweet little mascot and hard working therapy donkey*



*Our newest rescue, a retired roping horse. Life has not been kind to this sweet gelding. He has a dent in his face and scars on his nose, but he has a wonderful disposition, trusting and kind. In just a few short months at ESS he has filled out to close to a normal weight and he has won the hearts of all who work with him.*



*An equine-assisted learning and therapy class, learning to lead the horses through a series of obstacles. It's all about teamwork and communication!*

*Well-being occurs when we seek and find our unique place in the universe and experience the continuous cycle of receiving and giving through respect and reverence for the beauty of all living things.*

*-Walking on the Wind: Cherokee Teachings*