

# Equine Spirit Sanctuary

## Summary of 2021 Activities and Plans for 2022

The last week of January each year we traditionally hold an Annual Meeting here at Equine Spirit Sanctuary. The meeting is to review the past year and preview the current year's plans and activities. We did not have this meeting again this year due to the high number of COVID cases in our community. This document is replacing the Annual Meeting.

Current ESS Directors: Ruth Bourgeois, Teresa Pisano, Eleanor Hudiburg, Kyla Katz, Sandra Romero, and Debbie Devine.

### Summary of 2021 activities:

- We had shut down almost completely in 2020 due to COVID and had expected to be reopening as usual in 2021. But with the ongoing pandemic and concerns for everyone's health, we did not reopen as we'd hoped to. Instead, we resumed our activities on a smaller scale. We limited the number of volunteers here, reopened for visitors by appointment, and did as much as we could while keeping the number of persons on site relatively small. In September David began bringing kids out for class again, starting with just two students at a time, every other week. They are now having class here at ESS again every week.
- In January our hay barn was finally completed, after numerous delays in 2020. We had purchased the 12x40 foot three-sided hay barn the year before, but it took several months to get a building permit and then there were construction delays, due to COVID, but we are very happy to finally see this long time dream finally come true.
- We participated in the Taos County Earth Day's 2021 spring cleanup day. Volunteers helped clean up Los Caballos Road and Cuchilla Road leading up to ESS. That was a nice way to start the spring, making a clear way to ESS!



*We picked up lots of trash!*



*Grace and Penelope helped, too!*

### New horses at ESS:

- Dulcy, miniature horse that was returned to ESS after her companion died. Dulcy decided that Scout was the best horse ever and the two have become best friends. She is totally devoted to him and they make the cutest pair.
- Melvin, an appaloosa mare donated to be a program horse.
- Belle and Maggie, two mustang mares whose owner was no longer able to care for them.
- Frosty, a starving Appaloosa gelding that the brand inspector brought to ESS.



*Scout and Dulcy.*



*Melvin is a delightful horse with good manners. She enjoys getting lots of attention and being part of our programs.*



*Frosty was in pretty bad shape when he came to ESS but after getting much needed dental care and a new diet of mash, he gained weight quickly and now is doing great.*



*Tango Belle, Maggie and Frosty getting to be friends in the arena.*



*Hava, our pony, had a rough time after developing Cushings and founder issues, but is doing much better now and enjoys getting attention from the kids again.*

- **Programs:** We had 14 kids that participated in the regular riding lesson program and 10 that took therapeutic riding lessons and did the Read to the Donkeys program. We had volunteer practice sessions with our Yoga and Riding program.



*Klassy Kat was our hardest working kids' lesson horse. Jazzy, the donkey, supervised whenever she could!*

- And after years of needing a new wheelchair ramp, we finally were able to raise the funds and purchase a nice aluminum ramp. But, due to COVID delays with construction and delivery, the ramp that we purchased in early summer did not actually arrive at ESS until October, as we were at the end of our season's lessons. But we are looking forward to using it in 2022!



*Spirit, above left, and Kat, right, made a great pair for kids' lead line lessons.*



*Poncho, below, benefits a lot from the Masterson Method® bodywork and enjoys having the volunteers give him lots of extra attention.*

*We had volunteer practice sessions with our Yoga and Riding program. Yoga and horses are a great combination! Poncho was a favorite mount for the riding exercises.*



- **Holiday Open Barns** were held the first three Saturdays in December. This replaced our annual Holiday Horse Party fund raiser.

Each Saturday we had a nice group of visitors that enjoyed our festively decorated classroom and barn. We did free pony rides for the kids and set up the donkeys grooming corral with Penelope and Marley. We ended up doing an extra day, on the third Sunday that month also, after the newspaper listing mistakenly advertised it as another Open Barn day. The events were fun for everyone and we are thinking that we may do this venue again in 2022.



- **Adoptions:**

It was a wonderful year for Grace and Joy, our two big donkeys, who went to a new home together in Santa Fe. Reina was adopted out the last week of December. The perfect home came up for her and, as much as we'll miss these sweet ESS equines, it was a joy to be able to see these adoptions happen.



*Grace and Joy with their new owner, Deirdre.*

- **It was a tough year for losses.** We had Foxy euthanized, and then his buddy Lucky also, after we'd nursed Foxy through bad dental issues and founder and Cushings problems. He was finally sound again, then went into congestive heart failure and it was time to let him go. Lucky's time had come, too, simply due to complications of old age. He was totally attached to Foxy and we knew his interest in life would be gone after Foxy was no longer with him.

In August, we lost Chico to a severe colic. He had been an ESS program horse for the kids' programs and equine-assisted therapy sessions for many years.



**2021 Financial:** Note – this is a summary only. The final report will be finalized when the CPA finishes the taxes for the year.

#### 2021 Summary of Income and Expenses

| <b>Income</b>           |                 | <b>Expenses</b>                |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Grants / Foundations    | \$34,520        | Feed, supplements              | \$28,000        |
| Direct Public Support   | \$33,526        | Contract services              | \$19,189        |
| Indirect Public Support | \$509           | Facilities and Equipment       | \$16,489        |
| Other income            | \$593           | Facility /buildings            | \$5,017         |
| Programs fees / income  | \$1,085         | Program expenses               | \$4,450         |
|                         |                 | Payroll                        | \$7,714         |
|                         |                 | Hoof care, trimming            | \$2,540         |
|                         |                 | Supplies - office              | \$1,888         |
|                         |                 | Other expenses                 | \$1,652         |
|                         |                 | Veterinary / horse health care | \$1,480         |
|                         |                 | Supplies, Repairs - barn       | \$1,367         |
|                         |                 | Phone                          | \$1,318         |
|                         |                 | Internet                       | \$839           |
| Federal Loan            | \$24,000        | Fundraising                    | \$528           |
| COVID Relief            |                 | Advertising                    | \$282           |
|                         |                 | Tack & equipment               | \$199           |
|                         |                 | Events                         | \$172           |
|                         |                 | Horse rescue license           | \$100           |
|                         |                 | Postage                        | \$48            |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>\$94,233</b> | <b>Total</b>                   | <b>\$93,272</b> |

#### 2022 Planned Activities

- Winter classes for volunteers are being held on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. These are on basic body-work for horses, specifically Masterson Method®. Each class includes video and print lessons, hands-on practice with the horses, and follow-up discussion. The classes are going well and will be offered to the general public during the summer months this year.
- Volunteer training for Equine-Assisted Services programs will be held in May on Tuesday afternoons. Depending on how many people sign up and how things are going with COVID, we may also do a class on Thursday afternoons.

- Equine-Assisted Services Programs – Offer lessons on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, depending on the number of volunteers we have and funding available to cover program costs.
- **NEW** – Horse experiences at ESS, for anyone interested in spending time with horses and/or donkeys, with various activities. See details below.
- Anna Blake Riding (lessons) and Writing (workshop), May 13 and 15. See the flyer at the end of this document for complete details.
- Spring Open House Saturday, May 28. We may do an Open House May 21 also.
- Fund raiser at Barbara Meikle's Gallery, Santa Fe, in June. Date TBD.
- Holiday Open Barns again in December, (tentative) Saturdays – Dec. 3, 10, 17.

### **NEW - Horse Experiences at ESS:**

This will include visits with the donkeys, hands-on grooming and learning; EAAT sessions; basic horse skills lessons; riding lessons; art; Read to the Donkeys; mini horse play for kids of all ages with the mini's and Hava, the pony, etc.

The goal is to accommodate the interests of tourists and locals, providing a unique, meaningful experience at ESS where they can choose the activity and intention. From pony rides to teaching advanced horse owners a new skill, like T-Touch or the Masterson Method®, we have much to offer. Since Taos is a tourist destination and we get visitors from all over the world that come to ESS this seems like a great way to incorporate all of our programs.

### **Goals for property development:**

- Misc. minor repairs to building and facility. Need to do some maintenance on the barn roof and ceiling.
- Property improvements including burying electric lines and re-burying 2 existing water lines; set up electric plug-in boxes near each of these 2 hydrants. Cost will be roughly \$3,500 for this project.

### **Help is needed in the following areas:**

- Volunteers for the HHK / therapeutic riding program and other ESS activities
- Facility maintenance
- Fund raising / grant writing / office work; finding sponsors for the ESS equines.

### **Other:**

Over the past years we have talked about working towards our goal of building an indoor arena. This will include putting together a business plan and outline of all expenses involved. The adjoining three acres at the top of the property along the road can be purchased for around \$85,000. We need this to accommodate the arena. The plan is to purchase the three acres, put in utilities, build the arena and pay off our current mortgage at a cost of roughly \$500,000 for everything. The indoor arena would ensure ESS's long term sustainability and also, in the event that we were to someday downsize, make the property marketable. An arena would be ESS's final step in establishing a full service, year round equine facility for our community.

Our Equine-Assisted Services programs are well established and highly successful. But unless we were able to come up with additional program instructors, staff persons for office and marketing, barn and horse help, we are still not in a position to think about taking on the arena project. The COVID pandemic put a huge halt to our goals and intentions. The biggest thing to come out of the experience is that we recognize now that the most important thing for ESS's future is to continue to bring in the right people, to work on being able to hire staff persons and not just depend upon volunteers, and to continue to work towards a succession plan that assures ESS of a long future ahead. We have grown to the point of where it's too much for one person to oversee everything and to expect volunteers to be able to do all the work. Some aspects of ESS's operations require skilled workers and professionals in order to maintain the standards of our work.

Let's see where it takes us and maybe, just maybe, the arena will happen. But whether it does or not, ESS is doing amazing things and we have made it through two extremely difficult years while helping a lot of horses and a lot of people, too!

## A few parting shots from 2021



*It was wonderful having visitors again in 2021. The horses especially loved having the kids back.*



*Zoe and Melvin became best friends and there were lots of great moments just relaxing in the sunshine.*



*Happy, content horses...*

*And beautiful flowers and peaceful moments!*



*Gypsy getting used to the new wheelchair ramp.*



*Donkeys and mini's - and Baylee, too!*



*Honey and Reina (left) and Red and Cisco (right).*

*Enjoying the good life at ESS!*



**Equine Spirit Sanctuary**  
presents...

**Writing & Riding with**  
**ANNA BLAKE**

**Writing Workshop & Private Riding Lessons**  
**Wednesday, May 11 and Friday, May 13, 2022**



Anna Blake is a horse advocate, international clinician, and award-winning author. She trains horses and riders of all levels with an emphasis on affirmative training, equine communication, and mutual awareness. With wit and compassion, Anna helps us to understand the deep and powerful connection possible between horses and humans. Rider and auditors are welcome. Get acquainted with Anna and her “relaxed and forward” philosophy at [annablake.com](http://annablake.com).

Award-winning author of six books and co-founder of Lilith House Press, Anna writes parables about horses and life. Small-group intensive writing workshops begin with a conversation about calming signals followed by writing prompts, along with group sharing and discussion. No horse experience required. No writing experience required, curiosity a must. It isn't about whether you want to publish, it's about telling a story.

**Riding Lessons: \$80 per person; Writing Workshop \$80 per person. Sign up for either lessons or the writing workshop or both for \$150. Lessons will be scheduled in the morning, writing in the afternoon. You can arrange to bring your own horse for the lesson or ride an ESS lesson horse.**



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