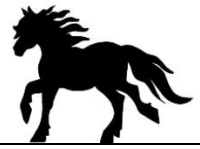




Equine Spirit Sanctuary

Summary of 2022 Activities and Plans for 2023



Current ESS Directors: Ruth Bourgeois, Teresa Pisano, Eleanor Hudiburg, and Debbie Devine.

Summary of 2022 activities:

We began the year with expectations of resuming our programs and reopening as much as possible as Covid became less of an issue. But then there were many other unexpected challenges and problems.

- Through the winter months, David continued bringing kids out for class once a week. He had started bringing just two out in the fall of 2021, but by the end of spring 2022 there were usually four kids here each week for class.
- We participated in the Taos County Earth Day's spring cleanup day in April. Volunteers helped clean up Los Caballos Road again.
- Equines acquired: Blanco, a gelding from the Pueblo that came with a severe barbed wire cut on his hind ankle; Jack and Jackson, a mini donkey and miniature horse that were adopted out in 2020, were returned to ESS; Mocha, an Arabian gelding, owner surrender; and Pepper, a Shetland pony, owner surrender.
- Veterinary care temp boarding: Ziggy, heel bulb cut. Gypsy Vanner, for rehab bodywork and training.
- Did a fundraiser at Barbara Meikle's Gallery in Santa Fe July 2 with our donkeys, Penelope and Marley.
- Programs: We had just six kids and two adults that participated in the regular riding lesson program and four kids that took therapeutic riding lessons and did the Read to the Donkeys program, and one adult that took therapeutic riding lessons.
- Completed setting up an Endowment Fund and an Intermediary Fund with the Taos Community Foundation.
- Anna Blake Clinic was held the last weekend of August.
- Had a group of Wal-Mart store managers here to do volunteer work; also had Habitat for Humanity work crew here three times in November / December to do maintenance projects.
- Holiday Open Barns were held the first three Saturdays in December. 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 with Blanco and Gypsy Vanner and set up the donkeys grooming corral with Penelope and Marley. For some reason our emails did not get to the editor of *The Taos News*, but each week we had more people out and ended up having more than last year's events. This was due to just from social media, flyers hung up around town, and word of mouth.
- Had a group of kids from Taos Behavioral Health Services out for a visit the last week of December.
- It was a hard year with many losses. We lost Lars to colic in January; Scout to eye cancer in June; Kat to colic in August; Basquine to a cancerous growth in her hoof and complications of Cushings, and had Jazzy put down (old age and founder) in October.
- One of the biggest challenges was finding affordable, good quality hay due to the fires, drought, and then the intense monsoon rains.



2022 Financial: See handout. Note – this is a summary only. The official report is the 2022 990, which is done by a CPA.

2023 planned activities:

- New this year: Winter Thursday afternoon discussion groups with the theme “Honoring the Spirit of the Horse: Awareness, Connection and Resiliency.”
- Also new this year: mini clinics / workshops once a month on Saturdays, facilitated by Aline Gittleman and Robin Waugaman.
- Volunteer training for Equine Assisted Services programs will be held in May on Tuesday afternoons.
- Equine-Assisted Services Programs – We plan to offer lessons on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, depending on the number of volunteers we have and funding available to cover program costs.
- Horse experiences at ESS, for anyone interested in spending time with horses and/or donkeys, with various activities. We had hoped to start this in 2022, but due to conditions of the fires and then heavy monsoon rains we were unable to do so. See details below.
- Spring Open House Saturday, May 27.
- Fund raiser at Barbara Meikle’s Gallery, Santa Fe, July 8.
- Holiday Open Barns again in December. We may do just two Saturdays instead of three this year.

We also have requests from Vista Grande High School and DreamTree for planned activities with small groups of teens. We will need volunteers to assist with these activities.

Horse Experiences at ESS:

These 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 the ponies.

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®, ESS has 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 and repairs.
- Fund raising / grant writing / office work; finding sponsors for the ESS equines.

Looking to the future:

Over the past years we have talked about how the greatest need to ensure a good future for ESS is to continue to bring in the right people, to work on being able to hire staff persons, not just depend upon volunteers, and to continue to work on a succession plan. It is too much work 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. This year we will continue to work towards building a staff that would include a volunteer coordinator, a barn person and program support staff persons.



A look back at 2022:

April / May – fires and more fires!



The 2022 Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak Fire was the largest and most destructive wildfire in the history of the U.S. state of New Mexico. Burning 341,471 acres (138,188 hectares) between early April and late June in the southern Sangre de Cristo Mountains (in San Miguel, Mora, and Taos counties), the wildfire was the largest of the record-breaking 2022 New Mexico wildfire season and the largest wildfire of 2022 in the contiguous United States. The fire destroyed at least 903 structures, including several hundred homes, and damaged 85 more, while threatening more than 12,000 other structures in the region.



*The Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak Fire was formed from the merger of two separate wildfires: the Hermits Peak Fire began on April 6 when the U.S. Forest Service lost control of a prescribed burn, and the Calf Canyon Fire began on April 19 when an improperly extinguished Forest Service pile burn operation from January rekindled. The two fires burned into each other during a major wind event on April 22, 2022. Afterwards, the combined blaze was referred to and managed as a single incident as it grew and surpassed the 2012 Whitewater-Baldy Fire Complex to become New Mexico's largest-ever fire until it was fully contained on August 21.**

**Notes from Wikipedia website*



And in August, we had monsoon rains. The rains were so heavy that our property flooded.



But it did dry up a lot by the end of the month and we were able to do our clinic with Anna Blake.



September skies brought drier conditions, and incredibly beautiful clouds!

We had several wonderful weeks in the fall months, as the trees turned to gold.

Right – Hope and Poncho.



And then it was winter. December brought snow and cold. The volunteers did a great job decorating the barn and classroom for our Holiday Open Barns. We had a lot of visitors and did lots of pony rides with Gypsy and Blanco. It was a wonderful way to end the year!



Jackson on a cold wintery day. He has no problem staying warm with a fluffy coat and also lots of good hay, thanks to our donors!



Thank you, everyone who made a 2022 memorable, good year!