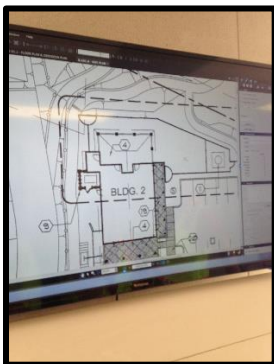




It all started with a vision...



a plan...



some dirt...

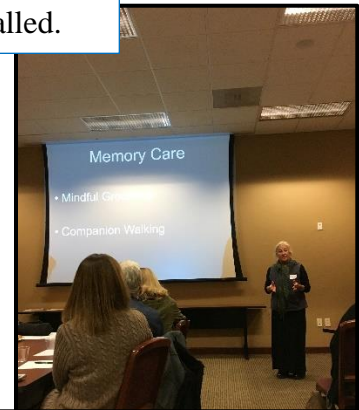


some luck....



A dedicated crew to support the effort, to work with the vision, check the plans & say let's do it!

First “official” presentation with a large group of Integrative Wellness specialists in the Tucson area. Barbara was her mesmerizing self and everyone was absolutely enthralled.

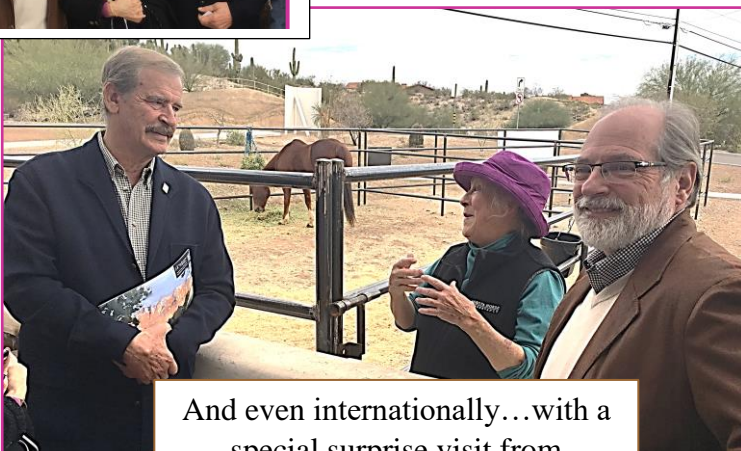


Taking the ‘show on road’ as we got the word out. Something is afoot (or a-hoof) at a new senior community on River Road...the vision is taking form.

In 2015 The Stable is under construction and *In the Presence of Horses* is created. In 2016, The Hacienda at the River is completed with first residents moving in spring of 2017!



Support & interest comes in many different forms...locally with much gratitude to our Watermark resources & River team....



And even internationally...with a special surprise visit from Mexico's past president, Vicente Fox & his wife!



One day we got a call from a TV crew from Hong Kong asking to film & interview us for a 'wellness & seniors' piece for their viewers back home. Never a dull moment!





Phyllis & Little Joe...
An extraordinary heart connection



The 'Pony Paddock'/Stable
becomes a beehive of
activity

Eve, Prissy and the Walker

When this visit to the Pony Paddock took place, Eve had been at the Hacienda for not more than a couple of months. This was not her first interaction with the horses.

Eve had come onto the paddock porch with her standard metal walker. Walkers and other assistive devices are always very carefully considered around the horses...and yet, somehow, the horses seem to just know that they are 'part of the person' and therefore not scary.

Eve was very drawn to Prissy and wanted to say Hi to her. The heart connection and enthusiasm between them was palpable. I was safety support for Eve, Barbara was facilitating. Barbara looked at Carol, our horse handler, to ask if Prissy was OK with the walker. Carol said absolutely...yes.

So we had Eve move slowly toward Prissy's head ... she was fairly close... then stopped to check in. At this point Prissy reaches forward to take the walker *in her teeth* and pull it closer to herself a few inches. Prissy went on to do this FOUR separate times... deliberately pulling Eve to come close enough to stroke her face. There followed a few minutes of heart-to-heart communication and appreciation as Eve was stroking and talking to Prissy.

Such a loving and gracious exchange of true heartfelt connection.
Amazing and precious moments to witness and confirm the essence of this Work.

Eve & Prissy...

No photo captured *during* above story
...too moving of a moment to do
anything other than be still and present.



A moment we will all remember....Little Joe walks up and puts his head in Major General Jonathan "Jack" Burton's lap. "The General" (as we all called him) fought in both WWII and in Vietnam as part of the U.S. Cavalry and after the war, he rode on the U.S. Equestrian Team during the 1956 Stockholm Olympics. Little Joe and the General became fast friends during the General's last years with us.



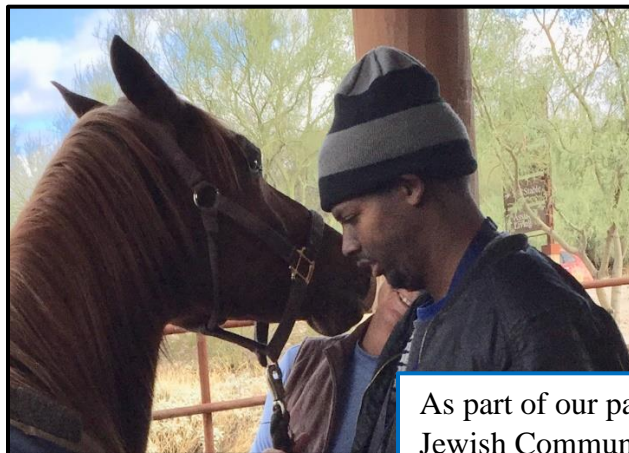
In the Presence of Horses
expands to the Hacienda
courtyards—the residents and their
families love their visitors!

Lots of activity with our Mesquite (AL) residents—loving having the horses come to them!

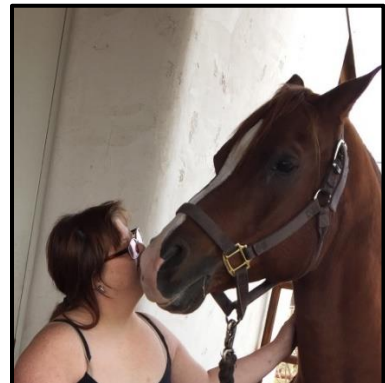


Thanks to an incredibly dedicated cadre of volunteers, our residents truly thrived and blossomed in an extraordinary way as our ITPOH (In the Presence of Horses) program continues to unfold.

Hacienda at the River &
JCC Partnership



As part of our partnership with the Tucson Jewish Community Center, we started offering a time every Wednesday morning (starting December of 2017) for young adults from their Special Needs Services program to spend an hour with our horses, equine team and residents. The friendships, connections and impact has defied words. We can't wait to get this started back up.



Making friends with Herman the horse made
Hannah's day...and ours as well!

Betsy and Prissy
In the Presence of Horses



Betsy (AL/Mesquite resident) did not miss a single day with the horses...the energy she gave and received was profound. When it was clear that she was in her final month, her family asked if the horses would make a special appearance for a gathering of Betsy's family (from all parts of the world) in our Acacia Café courtyard. Not only did we happily make that happen, after Betsy passed, her final "celebration" was held at our Hacienda Stable with her family and our team toasting, reminiscing and honoring her life! As her niece, Kristin, said: "It was because of the horses that we all got Betsy for at least another year of life before it was her time to go. We are all so grateful." And so were we!!



Once we got the 'Horses in the Courtyard' idea down in AL/MC courtyards...we introduced ITPOH to our Springs guests with an overwhelmingly lovely reception. Horses visiting the Springs became a huge highlight and draw over the last couple years.



This Springs guest said she ‘only wanted to look at the horses and was way too afraid to touch them.’ I absolutely love this sequence...clearly she worked through her fear as these photos illustrate. It was such a beautiful metaphor for what our Guests all need to do at times: work through the fear of the unknown, accepting a health outcome we maybe did not expect and have the courage to embrace something that is out of our comfort zone. In this case, her courage and openness with Herman touched us all.



IN THE
PRESENCE *of*
HORSES®

Magical Moments



Herman

Ken, Cracked Ribs & Courage

One of our Springs Skilled Nursing guests was in for a short term stay to recover from very intense foot surgery. With every day he was with us, he was gaining more energy and one day he shared a story that pierced my heart.

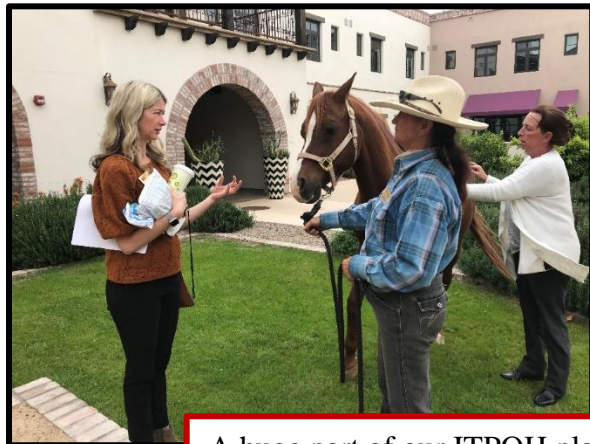
I walked into his room and he declared “I am a changed man...I am a man that now loves horses and you have no idea what a big deal that is. You see, when I was a boy, I grew up with horses but grew to absolutely hate them as a kid. I was in a small pen with a pony who turned on me and got me into a corner and started kicking me til almost all my ribs were cracked before someone got me out of there.”

Then Ken explained that the day before, he had asked a Naya (caregiver) to take him over to the Stable for our *In the Presence of Horses* Community Time in the paddock. He was in a wheelchair and said he didn’t want to tell anyone how scared he was but for reasons he did not know, he wanted just to go look at the horses from a (safe) distance.

No sooner did he get out on the paddock porch, but Herman, our Arabian gelding, came over to him. He said that for the first time, he felt “something different” and wasn’t afraid. “That horse came right over and sniffed my foot. Then it did something that made me cry...right then and there he put his head on my chest and just left it there.” He shared he had never felt such love and acceptance.

“I was wheeled away from there truly a changed man. When I get home there is a place right down the road from me where horses do this same kind of work as your horses do but with veterans. I am going to volunteer to help as soon as I can get around.” Then he said to me what happened there wasn’t a “brain to brain thing...it was all heart to heart...it was for me, life changing.”

Let the healing begin....

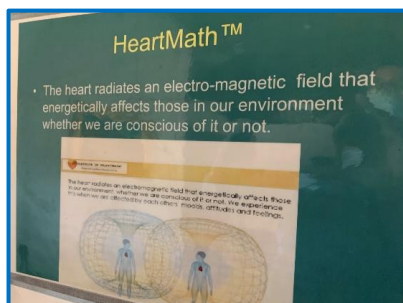


A huge part of our ITPOH plan has been to make sure our associates get their opportunity for time with the horses as well. We all have become true believers in the profound power of the positive energy and healing effects on all of us when the horses are here! ❤️



And now for the science/data to support what we already have been experiencing...

The Hacienda at the River becomes a part of a two year UA Research Study on the physiological effects of the human & horses: **Health Benefits for the Elderly in Horse-Human Interactions**. Kudos to Barbara K. Rector, Dr. Ann Baldwin and Ann Alden (in memoriam) for their collective effort in making this happen.



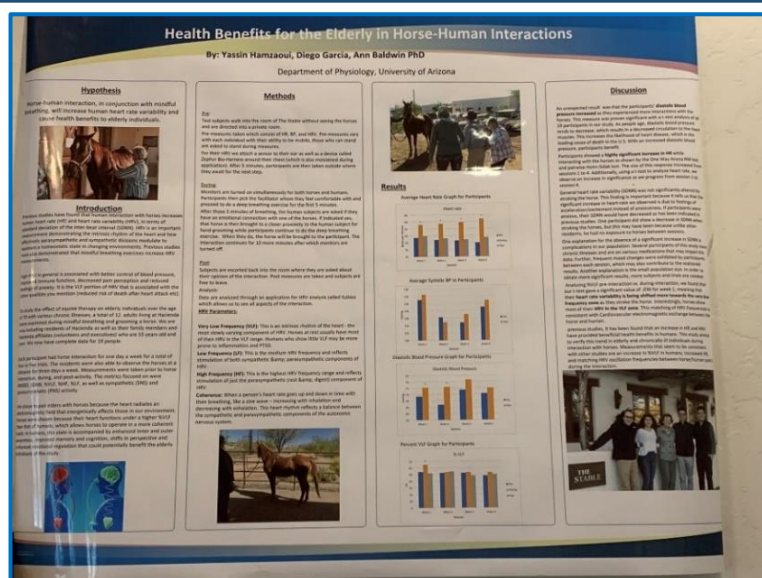
“The heart radiates an electro-magnetic field that energetically affects those in our environment whether we are conscious of it or not.”

During the Equine Human Bonding Research study the following trends were identified regarding Human-Horse (H-H) interaction:

--Increase in human heart rate occurs in H-H interactions, similar to the heart's response to mild exercise but without the physical effort.

--Heart sync: With H-H interaction heart rate variability frequencies often synchronize: the VLF (very low frequency) oscillations of the horse's heart rate as measured by an equine heart monitor are sometimes mirrored in the human who is also wearing a heart monitor.

--Overall, interactions promote ENLIVENMENT as witnessed by increased verbal engagement, sociability, positivity and attentiveness.

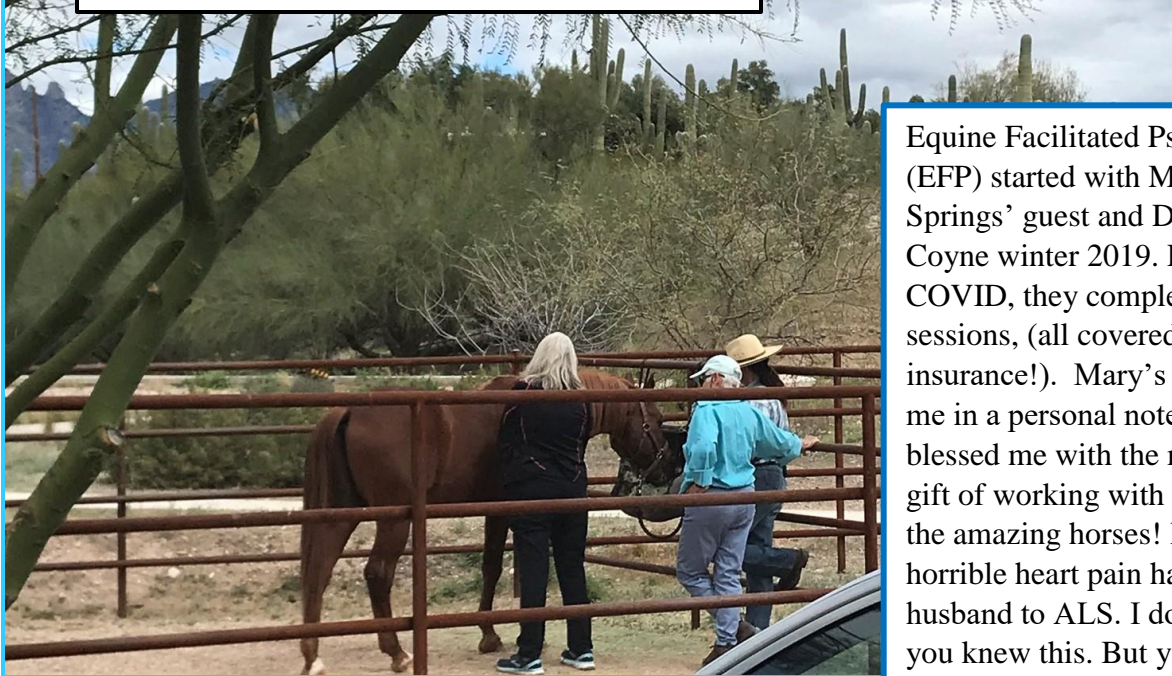


Dr. Ann Baldwin & her University of Arizona Students...part of EHBRT: Equine Human Bonding Research Team



Note the equine heart monitor (light tan belt) on the horse. A stability white belt is used for the participant who is wearing his *human* heart monitor under his orange jacket. Measures from both horse & human are being recorded during this connected interaction session.

Expanding the program: as part of our Hacienda Integrative Wellness offering: Equine Restorative & Personal Therapy begins...



Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP) started with Mary G., a Springs' guest and Dr. Nancy Coyne winter 2019. Prior to COVID, they completed 7 sessions, (all covered by insurance!). Mary's comments to me in a personal note: "You blessed me with the most precious gift of working with Nancy and the amazing horses! I was in horrible heart pain having lost my husband to ALS. I don't know if you knew this. But your gift saved my life." (May 2020)



Navigating Transitions I & II



Navigating Transitions was a two part Pilot Program with family members of our memory care residents, with one session including their loved one. In one of the programs we focused on *transitions* and the second one on the *journey of grief*. We very much look forward to starting these again once COVID chaos clears. A personal account of this experience by Rita (with her husband, Don, in photo with Carol) is included at the end.

IN THE PRESENCE OF HORSES—“NAVIGATING TRANSITIONS” PROGRAM
Transitions & Grief Work
with Family Members of Alzheimer’s/Dementia Residents

The Hacienda at the River

From Rita L., March 14, 2019—**Reflections/feedback on her participation in our Navigating Transitions program:**

The Navigating Transitions pilot program was very beneficial to me. The 10 weeks (4 weeks with first pilot and 6 weeks with 2nd pilot) that I spent with both of the groups and the horses allowed me to take a major step in my acceptance of my husband’s illness and to begin to move forward in life. The security of being able to talk openly in the group sessions and the feedback from Kathy, Laura, Nancy and the group members helped me to put his illness in a different perspective and to begin living more in the present.

I tend to get caught up in my own difficulties and feel that I am alone in how I feel and how I should deal with the issues. The sessions have showed me that living in the present, listening and observing what is going on around me lessens the depression that affects every part of one’s life. My husband is nonverbal and the lack of communication has been the most frustrating to me as I have always been a very verbal person. The need to talk is very important in my life. My husband lost his verbal understanding and communication early in his illness. Many things that should have been finalized never were. Working with the horses has made me realize that there are other nonverbal ways of communicating if one is patient, observant and willing to be in the present. This will be difficult for me to perfect but understanding that this form of communication does exist is the first step.

Several memories go with me as the sessions have ended. The most memorable was when my husband and I worked with the horses together. It was a period of closeness as we stroked the horse together and during the quietness of that moment I was able to feel that our lives still meant something. He seemed content and happy, as well. Carol then took his hand and gently kissed it and guided his hand to the horse’s chin so that he could rub it. My husband smiled the biggest smile and the pleasure melted my heart. Such patience and love for a human person was so touching. This act of love and kindness demonstrated another way of showing care for someone through nonverbal communication.

My other memorable moment was my “aha” moment when I realized that my husband may not know who I am. During the early sessions in the first pilot program, we had discussed being in the present and noticing what is going on around us and the nonverbal clues that horses give us. The concept seemed logical and when we were with the horses I actually began to recognize some of the signals. We had discussed the possibility that if horses can communicate nonverbally with people, then a nonverbal person may also be giving us signals, if we pay

attention. During the following weeks, I experimented with this concept while visiting my husband but soon realized that this technique may take some time to learn. My husband went through a period of ~ 3 weeks where he seemed to be ignoring me. This was frustrating and disturbing. I couldn't understand what I was doing wrong. One day, while talking with a friend, I was saying that when someone unfamiliar to my husband came to visit, he would look at them, his face would go blank he would close his eyes and appear to be sleeping and ignore the person. I, then, began discussing the frustration that I was feeling about being ignored and that he would look at me with this blank face and then close his eyes.

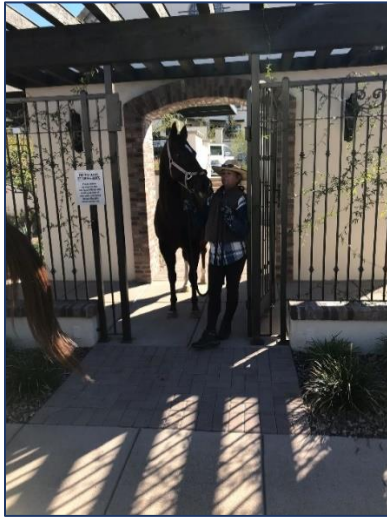
A day later, both of these conversations collided in my thoughts and I realized that he may not have known who I was for those 3 weeks. The thoughts of the nonverbal discussion we had in the group sessions came to my mind. I realized that I had been taking the ignoring personally and that, perhaps, he had been nonverbally communicating with me for the past 3 weeks but I had not been present enough to realize this.

The next day, when I went to visit, I went in with a different perspective. Rather than going in as his wife, I went in as a person that was there to do care for him and approached it as "Good morning. Today we are going to go do x, y, z" resulting in a completely different positive visit experience. After 2 days of this method, I walked in for a visit and my husband said very happily Hi! He was back again. His illness has been deteriorating but in my mind he had stayed at the same level of my expectations. I wasn't living in the present.

Navigating Transitions Program



In the Presence of Horses makes its debut at The Hacienda at the Canyons in Feb. 2020—Fun with the nuns & all!



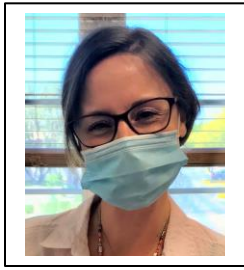
Canyon's Executive Director, Shannon R., leading the way with Herman!



And then there was COVID 19...the presence & energy of the horses were more necessary than ever..



These COVID photos all taken over the last few months as Herman and Prissy continue their visits to our Mesquite (AL) & Desert Willow/Cottonwood (MC) courtyards.



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“You Are My Sunshine” Ripple—September 1, 2020

Submitted by Veronica Riesgo—Springs DON

After several months of necessary limitations on our equine visits in this part of our campus, today’s homecoming with the horses visiting us here at our courtyard was an exhilarating experience for our Spring’s family.

Mr. B. moved from AL into The Springs skilled nursing community to share a room with his wife, Linda, of 60 years (*this year!*) just as COVID restrictions transpired and our equine visits in the Springs were curtailed. This morning, he was noticeably excited in his perfectly adjusted Australian cowboy hat and a smile from ear to ear as the horses in the patio came into his view. It was heartwarming to see his genuine smile, while he sat and gazed at our horse visitors, Herman and Prissy.

Upon his return to his wife, the excitement in his voice caught our attention. “It was great to see a couple of my old friends” he expressed to Linda. Linda opened her eyes wide and invited him to share more. This was moving, as Linda is not often expressive and most often will only acknowledge with a soft smile and a nod. This was different, the team knew it and so did Mr. B. He quickly moved to her bedside, took her right hand into his left and ever so lovingly brushed her cheek with his right. She beamed with joy, eyes wide open, and her gaze directly in his. He took everyone’s breath away when he began to sing to her, You are My Sunshine. With tears in his eyes and hers, the connection between them was extraordinary and the vitality in the room undeniable.

In full ripple fashion; the joyful energy the horses in the patio generated in Mr. B., he took to his wife and in turn together, they brought to us. There is a renewed essence of delight and possibility in our Spring’s family today.

A special thank you to our Community Life Director, Kathy Sawyer, and our equine partners for reenergizing our space and creating a memorable moment for all of us by simply sharing the spirit of the power in horses.



At the end of September 2020, the last day the Springs was open, here are Mr. B. & his wife, Linda, saying goodbye to the horses and to our River team. What a journey it’s been...and the horses have been here to see us through it

For those without whom this
would not have happened or still
be happening...

Huge thanks to Barbara—Our Equine & Hacienda Pioneer!



Anna Calek



Thanks to Merri Miller
for unwavering support
during these COVID
times.

Carol Rhodes



Wren Breedlove

Joan Curry



Thanks to Brenda Ritter for joy,
perseverance & support throughout all!



Thanks to all our volunteers & aides:
Wren, Joan, Claudia, Philip, Irena, Elysa,
Laura Brinkerhoff LPC, Marianne Schloss
RN, MDiv, Dr. Nancy Coyne MD & many
more. We can't wait to get you all back on
our campus!

AND...



David

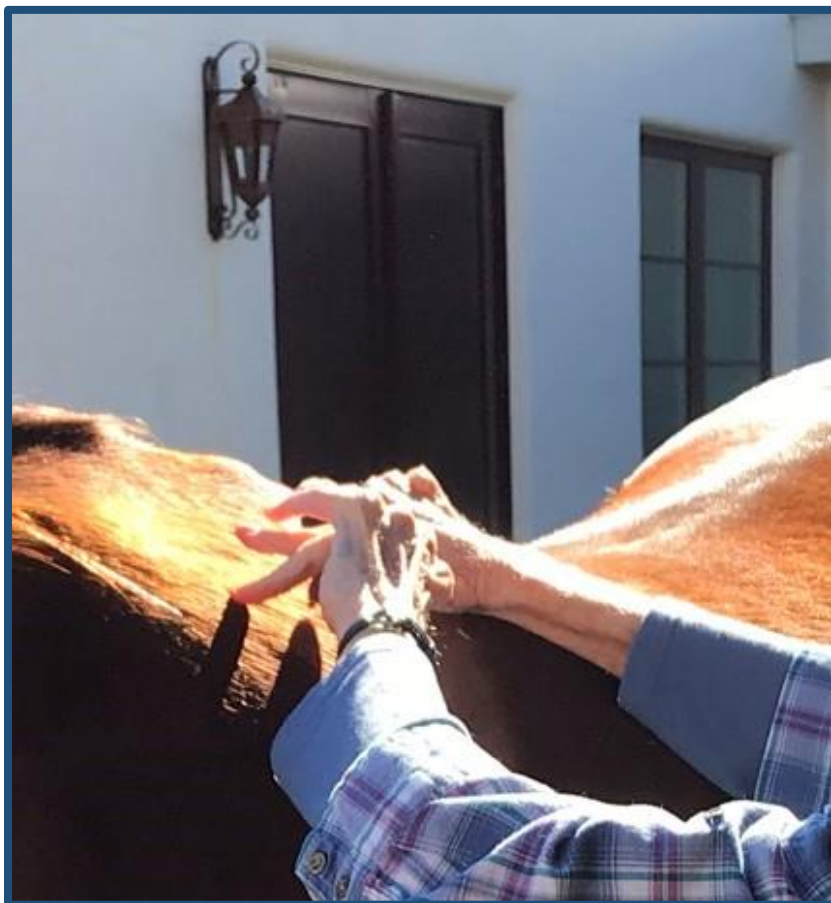


Diana

A heartfelt thanks to you, David, and Diana, for supporting this program both financially and passionately in its most recent COVID iteration. Its impact has been profound, magical and healing here at The Hacienda. Here's to many more years ahead!

All the best,

Kathy Sawyer
& The *In the Presence of Horses* Team



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