

OUR MISSION:

To help create a safer and more sane world through empowering young people, individuals, and families to live and act with kindness, compassion, and wisdom in all facets of life.

Horse Warriors

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Horse Warriors[™] is a 501(c)(3) Wyoming Corporation and PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, Int'l.) Operating Center Member

HORSE WARRIORS[™] 2017 CALENDAR OF EV<u>E</u>NTS

DECEMBER 1. 2016: Returning Student Applications Due JANUARY 15: New Student Applications Due FEBRUARY 15: Scholarship Applications Due MARCH 15: Scholarship Awards Sent Out APRIL 22: Volunteer Training Part I: EFMH Theory & HW Practice: Diamondfly Ranch MAY 13: Mentors' Training: Diamondfly Ranch MAY 20: Volunteer Training Part II: Mounted and Unmounted Work: Diamondfly Ranch JUNE 4-9: Horses of the Goddess[™] Professionals' Training Residential Workshop: Diamondfly Ranch JUNE 12 and 14: Jackson HW Programs Begin: Wilson Arena JUNE 13: Jackson Power Ponies™ & Mighty Mustangs™ Programs Begin: Wilson Arena™ **JUNE 15**: Star Valley Power Ponies[™] & Mighty Mustangs[™] begin: Diamondfly Ranch JULY 25: White Horse Social at the TC Fair AUGUST 26: GYMKHANA 9 AM - 5 PM: Diamondfly Ranch SEPTEMBER 9: Old Bill's Fun Run SEPTEMBER 10-15: Women & Horses Residential Watercolor Workshop: **Diamondfly Ranch** DECEMBER 10: HW Christmas Party Potluck & Winter Carnival 1 - 5 PM: Diamondfly Ranch

Notes from the Driver's Seat:

LISTENING WITH YOUR WHOLE SELF

Our horses are excellent teachers of perception and awareness. They use all their senses - Sight, Sound, Smell, Touch, Taste, and Feel - to read their environment, including reading us very accurately. They do this to survive.

This year we undertook a project of helping people expand their tool kits for improving the ways they receive and process information.



Half of good communicating is listening. We have the same sensory capabilities as the horses, but we default to visual and auditory input (eyes and ears!) as our primary sources of information gathering. However, they often don't give us the most complete, accurate picture. In the tech age, we don't always use our full "tool kit" to help us stay safe. The majority of our interactions now take place on screens, rather than in person. How do we learn the skills to read others accurately?

" We provided some thrilling and adrenaline producing moments..."

We encouraged our participants to expand their senses of touch, smell and feel (intuition) to process their interactions. There were lots of "Aha!" moments in this exercise! And we stretched them a little by putting them in some unfamiliar situations where they had to rely on some little used sensory processing skills to get back to a sense of comfort and control. While we stayed very conscious of safety, we still provided some thrilling and adrenaline producing moments for our families to learn about themselves.

2016 was a year of stretching in a number of directions. Our upper level riders competed in horse shows, formed a jumping squad, performed as a Drill Team for the Wyoming Desperados competition, were interviewed for an upcoming special on WY PBS, and upgraded to instructor level for the Mighty Mustangs[™]. We hope you enjoy reading about all of it in this issue!

Sensory Intelligence: OPENING OUR DOORS OF AWARENESS



Senses.

*W*hat are they? Do we use all of them? Do we realize just how powerful they are? Do we just use a few and forget about the rest? What if one gets taken away???

<u>Sight</u>: Most of us have this as our primary source of external information.

<u>Sound:</u> Our second most utilized sense; utilizes vibration

Smell: A great trigger for memory; types are either camphor, musk, flower, mint, ether, acrid, or putrid

<u>Taste:</u> Our preferences abound! Sweet, salty, bitter, sour, umami

<u>Touch</u>: Light, deep, pain, and temperature changes; receptors are throughout the whole body

<u>**Teel:</u>** The most esoteric one of all being aware of a concept such as nervousness, calm, excitement, fear, etc.</u>

Why did we do this, and what was it all about???

We share a concern with many others that, in this age of tech, we are losing interpersonal skills that can affect our personal safety. Kids are interacting with people online much of the time, and rely solely on the written word to convey meaning and intention. They have fewer and fewer encounters in person. Because of that, there is a lack of what we call "Sensory Intelligence", that can help people make accurate assessments of others. They miss the experiences of eye contact, tone of voice, body language, and the often inexplicable "gut feeling" we get when we really need to pay attention to a person or situation.

Because the horses are so skilled at non-verbal communication, we used their examples to teach how many senses go into behaviors that help them maintain safe social boundaries. From there we piggy-backed and created a curriculum that we hoped would help our kids and their families expand their awareness "bubble".

The sensory activities exercises were designed to help families in our Mighty Mustangs[™] program. All of the participants had been with us a minimum of one year, and had previously completed the Power Ponies[™] Parenting Program. They had a fair amount of comfort being around horses and knew each other already. They also had trust in the facilitators, which we felt was an important factor in getting them to do all the "stretching" we were asking them to do. We had 24 people in these classes, over an 8-week session. Parents participated with their children weeks 1, 3, 5 and 8.

Goals for the program:

Deepen student and parent awareness of all forms of communication;
Expand the use of sensory input to gain accurate information;
Improve communication with parents, horses and mentors;
Expand familiarity with horses and horse behaviors;
Increase the ability to communicate thoughts and feelings through both conversation and journaling;
Build confidence in sharing experiences with staff, family and peers;
Practice voicing opinions, thoughts and desires





DAY 1

Students began with a group discussion about senses. They defined what they thought a "sense" was. Did they think horses had senses just like people? Yes, they did!

They continued sharing their ideas about the ways a horse might demonstrate that it was using some of its "senses".

Their first task of the day was to catch their horses in the arena, and pay close attention to any clue that the horse knew they were approaching.

They pointed out that some of the horses responded without even looking directly at them - they seemed to just know they were a focal point for a human.

After the horses were all caught for the morning, they shared that the horses saw them, heard them, and felt them coming through their footsteps thumping on the arena sand.



their hands

DAY 2

 \mathcal{S} tudents and parents began with a group discussion about which senses they thought they used the most. Then they paired up, and took their journals out to the horses to begin making notes.

They wrote down as many specific descriptions as they could come up with: touch, smell, feel adjectives.



Christina and Sascha work together to record their "touch" identity clues in their journal

Touch Motes:

sleek fur • fuzzy coat • feel veins on front legs • dents in the brand • little tuft of fur on the left knee • big chestnuts • big ears • warm breath - breathes on your hand • bony withers • short tail • mane on the right • mane on the left • bump on neck between mane & shoulder • scar on hind leg • long mane • shaved mane • dent from broken muscle on neck • right back bum feels like arrows pointing back (very good!) • rough, ridged patch on lower left belly • flap on ear • nibbler • loose scab on left hind leg • chestnut is 3 fingers long • scar on right hind pastern • short forelock • long, thin mane • tall/flat withers • wet butt • mane on both sides • backside curves upward • thick tail • bump in hip • straight back \mathcal{S} mells were harder to describe. The term, "Good", was widely used, but some teams made their observations into a game, coming up with something clever and memorable so they could identify the horses when they were going to be blindfolded.

Smells:

sweet • a little sweet • very sweet! • good • sweaty • like grass • hay • bug spray • perfume • dirt, but good • cedar • wet dog • smoky • different in different places on the horse • spicy • like a horse! • no smell at all • dusty • dirty skin but not bad dirty skin • clean • like my son's head • like a sweaty man • smells great • warm like sunshine • thunderstormy wet • like a good hug

6. 5.1 5.1 7.1

The sense of "Feel" was the hardest to describe. Perhaps that's because we aren't used to discerning and communicating from that place. The brainstorming was good, however, and standing next to the horses the participants came up with some definitions they could recall when they were blindfolded.

Calm, relaxed, stubborn, happy, tired, nervous, loving, sad, energy, breathing fast, scary, relaxed in the middle, warmth, sleepy, wiggly

The Final Activity

The last session of our Sensory Awareness training involved riding. We asked both kids and parents to ride blindfolded - and backwards!

The goal was to use senses other than sight to help determine them where they were in space, and where their "focus of survival" was - we didn't want anyone falling off! Because these groups had already experienced a blindfold trust ride the year before, they were willing to up the ante in this new exercise and push their envelopes a bit.





This team has made great progress in creating a sense of safety and awareness - this parent feels so stable that she can ride blindfolded and backwards with no hands

Riders took a little time to get comfortable just being backwards. While before they had been used to a mane for a handhold, now they had to rely more on their own balance. They reported that finding the exact center of gravity took a lot of muscle focus. They needed to relax their lower bodies more, and find the rhythm of the horse. Some riders found that they became so centered they could ride without having to either brace or support themselves on the horses' hindquarters. "Look, Ma - no hands," was a common joke!



Horse, sidewalkers and horse leader all carefully and patiently help the rider maintain a sense of security

 \mathcal{W} e incorporated lots of turning and obstacles this time, and encouraged ongoing verbal communication between the child and parent. We included sidewalkers for safety and lots of instructor presence with each team.

 $\boldsymbol{\delta}$ ome of our riders said that their hearing became so acute that it was almost a distraction. Bird sounds that they had not been aware of without the blindfold seemed overwhelming. Helping them with deep brathing, encouraging them to be focused right in the center of their bodies, let them relax and start re-processing and making "sense" of unfamiliar body positions while riding.

The horses were wonderfully tolerant of this unusual activity. They were calm and even paced, even over the bridge, very likely "sensing" any unease from their riders, and doing their best to be reassuring. Hats off to our staff, mentors and volunteers for keeping safety our top priority!

Some interesting outcomes of the blindfold sensing exercises were:

1) <u>Children have a better olfactory sense than adults.</u> Nearly all of the kids perfectly identified the horses (and mule) by smell. They were surprised to learn how different each one smelled - they thought they knew what horses smelled like, but the individual subtleties were unexpected.

2) <u>Using only one sense at a time was challenging</u>. Smelling without being able to touch the horse, and standing close but not touching in the feeling exercise made it harder to gauge where participants were in space. It helped to have the parent or child touch the guesser to keep them comfortable.

3) <u>Hearing acuity really intensified!</u> When blindfolded, nearly everyone reported that they were acutely aware of the sounds around them - sounds that had been going on all afternoon that they didn't remember hearing while they could see.

4) <u>Feeling into the horses had some really interesting results.</u> For one group, the activities all took place in a large arena with lots of space between the horses and the participants. It was a nice, sunny day, and the accuracy for identifying by "feel" (not touch!) was about 60%.

For the second group, the activity had to be slightly altered. Their session took place on a rainy day. Instead of the horses being far apart, we had to use our barn as the setting. We had 2 horses in stalls, 2 horses in turnouts under the eaves behind the stalls, and 2 horses in the barn aisle in front of the stalls. So the farthest away any horse was from another was about 15'-20'.

During the "feel" phase of the test, many of the participants "flipped" the horses. That means that they identified the horse right next to theirs instead of their own. This happened so frequently that we postulated that the horses' energy fields were overlapping. This was especially evident when the teams would say they felt both nervous and calm at the same time. Were they reading one nervous horse, and the next door calm horse together? It's something to think about in terms of the energy "bubbles" we carry around with us.

5) <u>Our mule smelled really good!</u> Everyone agreed that Tulu had the sweetest, nicest smell of all.

PARENTS SAID:

 \mathcal{W} ho knew that horses came in so many different smells? I was surprised by how their smells could help me differentiate between horses when I was blindfolded. It was a great opportunity to learn more about the unique qualities of the horses; to identify them through their personalities, smells, and "feel". It was really enjoyable; I felt closer to the horses by learning about them through more than just my eyes identifying them by their colors and markings. I liked getting to know the other horses who weren't familiar to me, along with the excitement of embracing all of the different horses for who they are.

It was cool - a good experience. Horses have personalities - you could tell them when blindfolded because of other signals from the horses. Some horses are hesitant and you can feel that. It was so neat to try to figure out which animal it was and having to use other ways than looking to figure that out. It helped me remember all the horses because I had to give it more thought than just seeing them. You had to remember the stuff you looked for in that horse by using your senses. All of them had little things I never would have noticed. It was like you were studying for it. It was interesting to feel all over the horse - wondering if the horse would kick - I had to have trust before actually doing it. All of the horses were so good with it - not afraid of people coming towards them with blindfolds.

When I was blindfolded my strongest sense was touch. I really liked the touch sensations, identifying some of the horses by the scars they have, imagining what those may have come from. I liked taking the time to feel them, see how they reacted to the touch - some would pull away some were OK. The differences explained a lot about the horse - I had more understanding for the individual personalities and the individual experiences the horses have gone through to become who they are.

MEANWHILE...

7he Horse Warrors™ riders deepened their parent/child teamwork this summer, especially at the gymkhana. There the events always involve partnering and riding timed patterns, and they are challenging. One of everyone's favorite classes is the Pairs Cone Bending, where partners have to run a pole bending pattern while holding a 2' piece of rope at each end. The best teams are the ones who talk to each other throughout the run, and regulate their turns and forward speed through good planning.



Starting out is the easiest part, with the team holding their rope pretty easily. But as their speed increases, and as they have to make more synchronous turns, it's easy to drop that connection! Here the team slows down and has to reconnect before they can continue.



DRILL TEAM

 ${}^{\bullet}W$ e were invited to perform at the Wvoming Desperados Cowboy Mounted Shooting event in August. The Desperados generously donated the proceeds from their silent auction to us, which was greatly appreciated! Wyoming PBS filmed us and we were wildly proud of the precision and skill our riders showed. We included pairs, wedge formations, trotting and loping weaves across the diagonal, obliques and pinwheels. The spectators thought we were a traveling competition team!



Wyoming **PBS** Shines a Light on Our Best Practices!!

 \mathcal{W} e were thrilled to host Wyoming Public Broadcasting in November down at the Diamondfly. All of the upper level mentors were interviewed by Craig Blumenshine and his professional team. The girls answered a lot of questions, from what their very first impressions were when they began Power PoniesTM, to what has been the biggest impact that being in Horse WarriorsTM has had on their lives.



Craig Blumenshine preps Aspen with the questions he will be asking her during the filming

The day heralded our first significant (though not too chilly) accumulation of snow, so the riders got to show off their bareback, snow-riding skills. Laughing and trotting and loping through the big pasture, the girls demonstrated the wonderful relationships they have with their horses.

The interviewees shared their journals and art, and also read some of the poetry they wrote this fall.

"One our favorite quotes of the day was, "<u>I used to be really shy talking in</u> <u>front of people, but now look - I'm on TV!</u>" Oh, we are proud!!

C heck our Facebook page this spring for the March air date for the WY PBS special: https://www.facebook.com/Horsewarriors/



GRANT AND CURRICULUM SUPPORTERS

SKINNY ŠKIS WELLS FARGO DIAMONDFLY RANCH HARDEN FURNITURE PILLEN FAMILY FARMS WYOMING ARTS COUNCIL CRANE CREEK GRAPHICS ALOTTA SAND & GRAVEL PANARISI CABINETWORKS TCSD RECREATION DISTRICT SILVER STAR COMMUNICATIONS

TRANSLATING WHAT'S INSIDE

Art and writing are regular aspects of the Horse Warriors™ programs - for both children and adults. We love our time in the field working in our journals, and we also love having our guest presenters teach us



new creativity tricks over the winter.

 ${}^{\bullet}{}^{\bullet}{}^{\bullet}{}^{\bullet}$ e use a lot of different methods for opening up our creative channels. One of our favorites is open ended writing, where everyone takes a question or an opening phrase and runs with it in any direction they choose.

 \mathcal{W} eather affects us every time we're together, since we are always outside with our horses. This year we had fun defining and writing about storms, since we are always anticipating and dodging them! Here are some of our thoughts.

What is a Storm?

 \mathcal{A} storm is intensity. A split second that feels like the collapse of the world. Wind whipping in your hair as rain hammers on your back. Everything is harder during a storm, because you can't see everything.

 \mathcal{A} storm is just a moment that passes with the clouds. Grey gloom can fill the sky for days sometimes, but blue will always follow.

 ${f S}$ torms can grip your stomach in surges of panic. The mountains leer at you, framed by the stormy sky.

Not all storms come from the sky. Some come from a stone dropped in a stomach. A single nerve sparking a chain. Storms like this feel like the end as well. Everything falls like sand through open fingers.

 ${old N}$ othing can stop the wrath of a storm. We try to brace against it but in the end we can only wait.

There are many kinds of storms. There can be a good storm, a bad storm, a metaphorical storm, or something like that. People also have different views on storms: where you like it, you don't like it, or somewhere in between. For me a storm can be good and bad. It depends on whether you're in a good spot to endure the storm.

For example, a good storm was when I was in my cozy lake house that site on the Canadian side of Lake Erie. I was awakened by the deafening crackle of thunder. As I waddled downstairs in my PJs, I found my dad, cousins, and my mom sitting on the couch watching the black sky that was filled with streaks of lightning that would reach from up in the sky down to the water. From the safe and cozy lake house we watched the sky explode with light and booms. To me, that was a good storm, an enjoyable storm, a safe storm.

7've also been through many bad storms; as the dark clouds roll in and my heart starts to bubble with stress; when I'm outside and I know that the lightning strikes can reach me and hurt me. This is when I don't have a couch that I can sink into and let the storm pass. This is when I have to face the storm and hope it will end with a rainbow. To me a storm is something that will bring on stress and even terrify me, whether good or bad.

 \mathcal{A} storm is often thought of as a flash of lightning followed by rolling thunder and a downfall of rain, washing away the sun.

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But a storm can be much different. A storm could be many things, maybe a brother acting as a tornado throughout the house. It could be that one crazy cat who decides that the piece of paper is in her spot and it needs to move.

A storm may also be a sadness inside you, a constant battle between the happy and the sad. Many times a storm inside you starts with the sudden clash of thunder that is stretched out with a downpour of rain.

A storm could be very different though; maybe the rain washes away your fear and your sadness. It could be the end of an ongoing struggle, the final battle before it all comes to an end. The rain may leave the grass green, and when the struggle is over the birds come out to sing again.



When people say the world is alive it's the truth. When it's sunny the world is happy. But when it rains and the clouds roll over the world is mad. Like every person in the world has mood swings, it can't always be sunny. You need those dark moments because everyone has a dark side, and a storm is the world's way of showing that.

1t may seem like a storm is something that ruins all your plans, but if you look deeply you see that it is beautiful. The way the clouds come together, like a family leading the world together; the way the rain starts to fall, making the world look like it's crying the pain away.

 ${f \eta}$ he wind howling through the trees is

the world's way of telling you its story. Storms are the world's dark side but that doesn't mean it has to be ugly. The lightning illuminates the sky, showing that hope is not gone, and the thunder is answering the wind in a loud, booming voice.

r r r r r r r What is a Filter?

 ${f A}$ filter is a device that separates things from other things. A filter can also be your mind.

 \mathcal{A} filter is something that purifies or drains something. It can be many things, such as a coffee filter, a water purifier, or a drain.

A filter is an intermediary between something unrefined and something pure. It separates what is too large, too clumsy, too viscous or rough, from what flows through. A filter can be real, can be tangible, can be held, shaped, or it can be imaginary - something that is an internal thought or an internal process. We can choose filters to sort, to separate, to cleanse and refine. Filters can be between what goes into us and is acknowledged, or between something inside that eventually goes out after being sifted through a censor. Everyone has filters through which they process their experiences - all perceptions are unique. Social filters help us maintain healthy relationships - they keep us from insulting others or being insulted ourselves. They don't necessarily weed out the truth, but they can help temper difficult discussions.

 ${}^{\bullet}{\mathcal{W}}$ e take the idea of filters seriously. In order to maintain the emotional safety of our groups, we used this model as our agreed upon "Filter" for being together.



rrrrrr

We do make a difference...



1 sat on the beach at Leigh Lake watching the waves splash the shore, timing the sets, looking at the trees and the seas shifting. Every second a new wave hit, every rock I threw in made a difference in the timing. I want people to see me as a leader, not the weirdo I used to be. Now I feel better about myself and I want other people to do the same.

TEXTURES









 \mathcal{P} en and Ink sketching helps us see textures and contours. Downed trees that we found out on the trail provided us with great details to draw. We used different line weights and curves to replicate the unique qualities in the grain patterns of each tree, and came up with some beautiful drawings.



MANDALAS DRAWING ON WHAT MATTERS: *IMAGES OF INTUITION*





These pieces were created on 12" x 12" pieces of 1/4" MDF board with colored pencil, permanent marker, and graphite. Students worked on them over a period of 2 months during our winter art retreats at the Diamondfly.



This winter we continued working on inner knowing. We wrote down symbols that felt important in defining both who we are now, and where we want to go.

 \mathcal{W} e explored symbols from other cultures, and worked with the power of color to convey meaning (too bad you are only seeing them in black and white!).

 \mathcal{W} e used very limited language in our pieces. We wanted to find another way to speak our inner wisdom that would be powerful above and beyond the spoken word.



SHOW TIME!

Congratulations to Ainsley and Aspen, who took their favorite horses to the TC Fair show in July! They are upper level riders, Drill Team members, and mentors for the Mighty Mustangs^M and Power Ponies^M students. And excellent horsewomen!

They practiced for many hours, obstacle after obstacle, and pattern after pattern. It paid off when they did wonderfully well in the highly competitive Trail Class: Ainsley and Buzz won 2nd, and Aspen and Woody won 4th.

They also competed in Western Horsemanship and Ranch Pleasure, where Ainsley and Canyon won 5th in a huge class.









HARD WORK!

We like to help kids in our community with special projects and life skills. This fall we introduced a new family to Horse Warriors[™] and the daughters had a special goal: Raising money to go to Disneyland with their grandparents.

Brooke and Laci, age 9 and 7, come every Tuesday afternoon to Priscilla's ranch, and brush all 19 horses. In mud season this is quite a task, especially with horses as tall as Philippe (17.1h). Can-

yon and Nubbin, however, are the perfect size and have adopted the girls as their new best friends. Priscilla pays them out of her personal account, and is hoping to get a Mickey Mouse hat in return (just kidding!). Both girls are looking forward to being in the program in the summer, after their sneak preview of riding those fat little ponies!





Canyon loves his new "groom" and doesn't really like any of the other horses close to her. They might get his treats! Nubbin relaxes into his spa treatment below.



The girls are learning that getting paid means showing up on a regular basis, doing the work in a timely fashion, and being thorough with completing their

tasks. All the horses are very clean when they're finished - GOOD JOB!

POETRY (IT'S EASY!)

The Wyoming Arts Council sponsored a Poetry Workshop for the Horse Warriors™ groups this fall. Matt Daly, one of the WAC roster artists, spent a day at the Diamondfly guiding students through a <u>painless</u> process of creating poetry.

Matt used a number of fun (and sneaky) ways for us all to get into the flow of writing, and to discover how much poetry we all had locked inside. Starting the day with an exploration of senses and movement, we learned about short forms of poetry like haikus and cinquains.

 \mathcal{W} e worked with other poets' writings, too, playing with taking a line from a poem we read and creating our own piece from that. We played with poems that linked together, inspiring poets across generations,



Matt Daly receives some poetic insights from Snowflake, his Chicken Muse of the Day!

and wrote "series completion" poems ourselves. We wrote nearly all day long, with just a short lunch break in the welcome fall sun. By the end of the day there were many journal pages filled with inspirations and edits. Poetry Mining had been a success!

 \mathcal{A} s school districts cut back on many of their creative arts programs, we want to thank the Wyoming Arts Council for helping Horse Warriors^m pro-



Writing outdoors gave us many opportunities to work with all of our senses, and to celebrate the inspiration of the horses and nature. And Corgis.

vide alternate "voices" for our students. They love their art and writing time that is a daily part of our programs.

We hope you enjoy this selection of some of the writing we did together. We're proud of our poets!



At Panguitch Cemetery

I have spent no time pruning the old branches of the plum tree someone in the family planted over grandpa in his grave. In the desert, fruit trees grow stunted and gnarled and only where sprinklers soak an unexpected lawn. With such tough delicacy, I would rather leave each branch to frazzle, like an old man's white hair.

<u>A Good Horse</u>

- A horse, a good horse, you bury and cover with raven feathers, dried rose petals, black licorice and tears
- A horse, a good horse, you savor with spicy memories of racing bareback, laced tightly together by his tangled mane
- A horse, a good horse, you dangle against your heart, like your grandmother's paper-thin wedding band - your heirloom of loss
- A horse, a good horse, you just let go, without promise of replacement; saddle, blanket, bridle retired in dust
- A horse, a good horse, you resurrect with stories of courage and trust where he always runs straight towards you, dream after dream





<u>Serenity</u>

Serenity is calamity, the brightness of the day turns to the darkest of the night. The curiosity of the deep smell, the clean snap before it breaks; dusk hides from the bright.

<u>He Waits</u>

The dog sits, patiently, in the summer sun. His collar binds him to the building. He gazes down the streets, resting on a boy, coming from the school. The boy. The boy who tugs at the collar, the boy who sits with him, talks to him. feeds him. The dog's muzzle grays, the boy gets taller, winter arrives. The dog's dull eyes wander to the school, yet the boy does not come. Spring comes, at last the boy is here. He tugs on the collar, tugs on the chain. He empties his pocket of a biscuit, scratches the dog's head. "Thank you," he says, as he walks away. The dog lies down, dreaming of the boy, steel collars. and what could have been. He is warm.



If I had a Horse at Home

I'd spend whole afternoons with her head heavy on my shoulder. I want to bring a horse home, feel the coarse hair of her mane being braided with my fingers. I'd like to flick dust off her strong legs, then rest my head on her shoulder. I want her breath and heartbeat to remind me, with a horse my troubles don't matter. On a horse, I'd wrap my arms around her strong neck, close my eyes, feeling what it means to have true friendship. I'd like to brush flies away from her eyes she flicks more with her tail. I'd like to live with horses, feel their presence bring strength to my life.

<u>Ten Years</u>

Small and tangled, the tree stood with no more than ten plums within its grasp.

It stood ten long years without a single blossom, just waiting for the right time to be nourished by the soil.

It was time, time to blossom, time to grow.





The day's heat is distant now, Cool evening air slings the sun lower. Golden rays of light cast long shadows across horses munching hay. Here is calm. A voice cuts the silence, "You belong here."



LETTERS FROM HOME

At the end of our 2016 Mighty Mustangs[™] sessions, all of the students shared how it felt to teach their parents. Parents wrote letters of appreciation to their sons and daughters as well. Here are some of their often touching reflections.

"¶ get to boss my dad around and my dad gets better!"

"
 enjoyed taking part in learning from you, because no matter the age and size of the wisdom, there's always something to learn. I want you to know that I have been having an amazing time learning from you. I am very proud of you and all the things you have been learning and thank you for teaching them to me."

Love. Dad

"Dear Daughter,

Thank you for teaching me about horses. I enjoy watching you be so careful and diligent in the details of caring for the horses.

1 have been reminded from watching you - especially with horses - the value of focusing carefully on one thing at a time.

1 have also learned from you a tender strength. You are gentle and strong and I want to be more like you in that way.

I love you!" Mom



"Dear Son,

7t has been real enjovable to be taught by you. I usually am so busy trying to teach you all the things I want you to learn that I sometimes don't get your point of view on things, and sometimes it's good for dad to sit back and learn from vou. It has reminded me that we are always learning something, even us old guys, so the saying that you can't teach an old dog new tricks is not true. I'm very proud of you. Watching you work through things brings a big smile to my face. The first time I watched you get on Woody you looked so small that I had my worries and my doubts. But you are doing it and teaching your dad along the way - awesome! I really enjoyed missing a little work to spend this time with you. You make learning fun and I can't wait to learn more from you."

> Love you buddy, Dad



"Thank you so much for the awesome lesson on Spirit. You are an amazing teacher. I loved the way you demonstrated what I needed to do before I had to do it myself. That made me feel really comfortable and confident with what I was being asked to do. Your demonstrations for groundwork were excellent. My favorite part about your teaching when I was riding Spirit was your super confident, loud and clear teaching voice.

My second favorite part about your teaching style was how knowledgeable you were about what you were teaching. I am so proud of how well you have been paying attention and remembering what you have been taught during your Power Ponies[™] sessions. Overall, I am so incredibly proud of you and love watching you grow and blossom into a beautiful and confident young lady. Excellent job teaching and using all the new skills you have learned. Keep up the good work!"





""" thankful for you teaching me about horses. I love your compassion and empathy towards horses and other animals and people. I love your easygoing attitude - you are forgiving of my mistakes!"

> Love, Mom





Thank you to all these Capital Campaign sponsors, who helped us complete our 3-year effort to upgrade our arena footing! Now we are much safer for both horses and riders!



"**Dear Son**,

7 want to thank you for letting me experience the joy and love we get out of Horse Warriors™ together. Thank you for being patient with me and teaching me skills you have learned. I really, really enjoyed the class time we had when we were blindfolded and encouraged to use our senses to name each horse. I feel that has always helped build faith and trust between both of us. I want you to know how proud I am of you. You have really come along way the past couple of years. As you grow and get older I want you to continue to work hard and seek out and conquer your daily struggles. Know that I am always here for you - never be afraid to ask for help and know you will receive it. I love you. You are important to me. I want the best for you."

> Love, **Your Mom**



ADULT CLASSES



Residential EFL/EFP training: Perfect for riding instructors, therapists, coaches and program volunteers; 40 hours of continuing education cedit for PATH, CBEIP, etc.

Instructors: PRISCILLA MARDEN: CEIP-ED; TRI; ESMHL; co-founder/ED Horse Warriors™

NANCY WAITE O'BRIEN: Licensed Psychologist; CEIP-MH; owner Wind Horse Crossing, Inc.; former Vice-President of **Clinical Services at the Betty Ford Center**

Program runs 8 AM - 9 PM and includes daily hands-on activities with horses; Intermediate level riding skills strongly recommended

Horse Language, Safety & Herd Dynamics • Horse/Human Relationships Trust Building & Groundwork • Riding: Bareback & Saddle **Obstacles Training • Horse Assessment • Metaphors as Educational Tools** Games & Teamwork • Journaling: Art & Writing • EFP/EFL Theory & Practice Curriculum Planning • Mission Statements • Role Plays (Group created) All Meals/Snacks • Trail Riding and LOTS of FUN!



ADULT CLASSES





Residential Watercolor Workshop

September 10-15, 2017

Ride and Play with the Horses! Paint Them to Your Heart's Content!

Instructors: Sari Staggs (Watercolor) **Priscilla Marden** (Horsemanship)

Cost: \$1750: Includes all meals, snacks, shared lodging, horses, tack, helmets; Watercolor supplies list will be sent to participants to obtain on their own, as many participants will already have them

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you need to know that I love you for all of your perfect mistakes

wildly safe inside full of raw, white energy speaking truth in waves

juniper needles hard, bitter taste in my teeth squirrels won't eat them

> loving, gentle heart slow calming breaths of a horse drops of dew on leaves



Please help us keep up with our great work! YOU make the difference in many lives when you give a gift to our annual fundraising campaign.

Donations from people like you make up the lion's share of our funding. Tuition prices are low so that families can afford to grow with each other in such positive directions. Many of our families have more than one child participating. This is because parents see the positive changes in their kids.

We need your help to keep these programs accessible. **86% of our operating budget goes directly to programs.** That means scholarships, horse care, winter hay, veterinary care, art supplies, gas and oil, liability insurance, equipment, fence repair, "old horse" supplements, and minimal staff salaries (some of the lowest in the non-profit sector!). We have no "fluff". Our staff works hard at multiple jobs, and we manage our funds frugally and responsibly. Your dollars get stretched a LONG way here, so **please donate to keep all this great growth and change happening**. THANK YOU!!!

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