



OVER HERD

November 2016

Thanksgiving is Almost Here



Cheyenne



Chippewa



Ernie Griffith

Cloud



Honey Bun



Pecos & Tacoma

As I walk through the herd of horses watching them contently grazing in the back field, I am so thankful all is well with the herd of 35 horses. The sun is shining; the temperature is just perfect for us and the horses. **Cayenne** is just standing sound asleep. I make a mental note that her tail is once again down on the ground and needs to have a few inches trimmed off. The horses that lost a little weight during the extremely hot summer have gained it back except for a couple like **Hopi and Cree** that still need about 25 to 35 pounds. It always takes longer for the oldest horses to gain their weight back.

How wonderful it is to be able to walk up to each horse in the field and give a little scratch on their withers or some want a tummy rub. People think it is unusual to be able to greet each horse while they are out in their fields. It really isn't. If the folks here are at peace, then the horses will be at peace. If the people were to be negative, the herd would be very different. If people were rough with them and heavy handed, chasing them with a lunge whip or running the horses, everything would be more chaotic. The horses would not be at peace! Most of us work to keep the sanctuary peaceful for us and the horses. We have had people here that didn't understand the gentle handling of horses and how important it was for them to be balanced in their life in order for the horses to feel happy. The good news is that these people always move on, since they just don't seem to understand no matter whom or how it is explained to them.

Kit Carson and Memphis are enjoying the new covered hay feeder. **Hopi** is alone on the other side. The other hay feeder doesn't even have one horse eating hay. Horses will almost always pick fresh grass over hay if given a chance. These three have decided that the new covered hay feeder was built for them. But they are willing to share it with **Cree and Natchez**.

Battery powered lap tops are wonderful for sitting outside and being able to put my feelings down while enjoying the horses in the field. Once the horses figured out that I didn't have something they could eat, they moved off to continuing grazing.

(Cont. on Page 2)

Thanksgiving is almost here *(cont. from Page 1)*

Each day I know what a difficult mission all of us have undertaken...35 horses rely on us for everything they need to stay happy and healthy. This is not a mission where you can count on other people to provide for the horses....it is too expensive. The horses need each and every person to care about them and love them, providing what they can financially.

It has been a difficult summer and most months we had a budget shortfall. We are hoping we can replace the funds in savings this fall and winter when donations increase.... I pray!

We could have chosen to put horses in short-term foster homes, but we knew they wouldn't get the attention and care they get at the sanctuary. We could have chosen to only take in a half dozen or less equines, like most equine rescues. We could have elected to turn over the horse's ownership after a time to the people, but we knew this would leave the horses like **Sierra** and every other one vulnerable for the rest of their lives to abuse or slaughter. **Sierra** is welcome to live out the rest of her life here at the sanctuary. Every horse that HPS ever placed is welcome back for any reason. HPS is the largest equine sanctuary in North Carolina and provides the best care. We work with the best professionals, that often cost more, but it is well worth it, we never stop studying and learning.

With your help we have built wonderful barns, covered hay feeders and the indoor training arena. We are truly blessed! The good folks that help here know it is a mission from God to care for His beloved horses to the very best of our abilities and to look to Him for guidance. We pray that God lays it on your heart to aid the rescued horses.

Working with your Horse

Each week I talk to folks who have issues with their horse's behavior. Not all of our horses behave like perfect angels. We have two horses that are dangerous when they have their back hooves trimmed. We don't want anyone hurt and a little happy juice goes a long way in quieting the horse. It will help the horse to learn that this is not going to hurt them and it is okay.

We encounter about every issue you can think of in difficult behavior and can, over time turn the horse around into a trusting well-behaved sweetheart. (There are a few mentally unbalanced horses that are dangerous and will never be safe.) Without building trust and a strong bond with a horse first you may never be safe riding the horse. The horse has to believe you are going to keep them safe or they will spook at every little thing. A spooky horse is a dangerous horse and needs more time for de-spooking and to build trust in the rider. You will also be building trust in your horse and this starts you on the road to a partnership instead of dominance.

This training has to be done over time and gently. Here at HPS it starts in the training arena, but used to be done in an open small field. We just want the horse to follow on a halter and lead line with no pulling, a loose line and open hand. The minute you pull, the trust is broken. A longer than normal line is helpful. You invite the horse to follow you and walk sideways keeping your eye on the horse. This way if the horse stops you will not inadvertently pull on the horse. If the horse tries to move ahead, just turn to the side and put yourself back in front.

This takes a different amount of time for each individual horse. When you stop, the horse should stop. It is very important that the horse stay behind you. The next step is walking around different objects, across a small tarp, stepping over rails, all of this without pulling on the lead line. As soon as the horse happily follows you move on to removing the halter and put as soft cotton long line around the horse's neck and draped over the horse's chest. No Pulling! Wait and be patient at all steps letting the horse figure out what you are asking. Of course, when the horse responds correctly, give a "Good Boy" and keep going. *(Cont. on Page 4)*

Honors and Memorials

"In loving memory of the Tennessee Walking Horse, the Great Mystic Dream - November 12, 2001
and our Sweet Sampson- November 12, 2014." Always Roberta



Fragile Circle

**"We who choose to surround ourselves with
lives even more temporary than our own,
live within a fragile circle, easily
and often breached.**

**Unable to accept its awful gaps, we still
would live no other way.**

**We cherish memory as the only
certain immortality,**

never fully understanding the necessary plan."

Irving Townsend, "The Once Again Prince,"
Separate Lifetimes, 1986

A Special Thanks To Our Wonderful Contributors

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Working with your horse *(cont. from Page 2)*

The next step in this trust and bonding training is great fun. You should have already done some trotting and slow cantering with your horse while they are on the long line around their neck. Now you are going to ask your horse to follow you with no halter or lead line. The first time you run and your horse is right behind you and you come to screeching stop and so does your horse your heart will swell.

All of these exercises should be done with a spirit of fun and laughter. If you are joyful your horse will be also. You will bore your horse if you do this every day. Once a week helps to keep your horse happy and interested. We start with short times that may only be a few minutes. Always stop on a happy note.

In between, walk out in the field and clean the horse's hooves without a halter, or scratch the horse and give a small treat and walk away. Brush your horse while they are out in the field. That way if the horse wishes to move away from you, it is okay. Little by little your horse will want to spend more time with you. Go out and just sit in the field close to the horse, but not too close. This is your time for meditating and getting quiet inside. The horse may quietly come to you when they feel your peace, just sit very still and let the horse smell you.

This is a quick shortened version without addressing everything. I will try to write in the future about the next steps with the horse, soon. If you want to work with the horses here and learn the full scoop of the training, come volunteer here and get to know the horses, then you can enter the training classes. Everyone starts with these first steps before they ride a horse.

