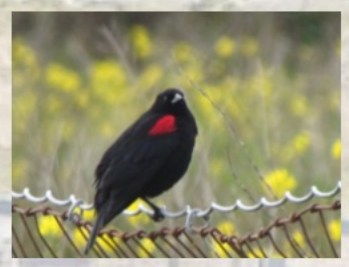
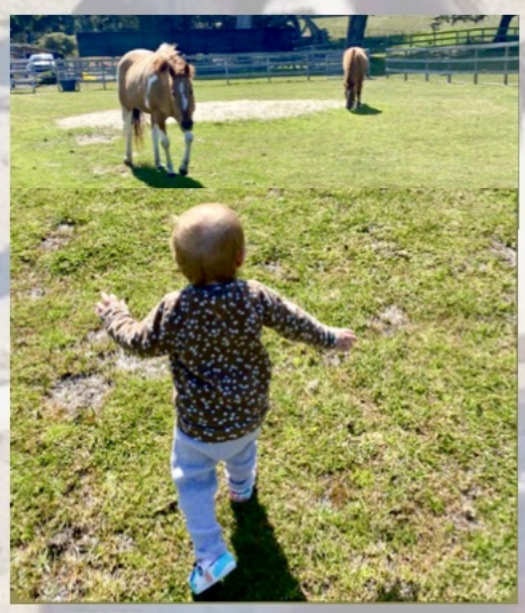
SSHS MAY 2022 NEWSLETTER

SEA STAR HORSE SANCTUARY

53A RILEY RANCH RD. CARMEL,CA 93923





THE JOYS OF SPRING!

Days grow longer with a warming light that sparks growth and renewal of the earth. Grass is so tall in the upper pasture that the horses have no interest in hay on days when they graze up there. Pairs of crows are gathering clumps of hair to make soft beds for their babies as the horses shed their winter costs. Barn swallows reinforce their nests with mane and tail hairs. Soon we'll be able to guess at which horses contributed to their mud constructions. Flickers call to each other from tall trees at the edge of the forest, as red-winged blackbirds sing in the meadows. Along with birdsong, another beautiful sound that has filled the sanctuary this season is the laughter of children.

Toddlers, Clementine and Rosie, took to the pastures at full speed. Distracted periodically by colorful wild flowers, they found delight in everything they saw. Totally uninhibited by the presence of large animals, the youngsters waddled straight toward the horses - with their doting parents and Sharon at their sides.Rosie's mother and grandmother lived at Point Lobos for many years. Her grandmother, Janet Roberts, left Jane with the sanctuary some thirty years ago. Jane grazed peacefully as Rosie romped in pastures, where her mother had played as a child. Rosie was right at home, as if she had absorbed something of horses, coastal breezes, and maritime chaparral from her mother's milk.

Gentle, old Seastar is the sanctuary's Ambassador to Little People. He was standing by the barn where a large star is mounted on the wall above Papoose's memorial garden. Sharon held Clementine as she sat on Seastar's back. The little girl kept repeating, "SEASTAR! SEASTAR!" Her parents, Kevin & Eva, kept confirming, "Yes, this is Seastar." They finally realized she was waving her arms toward the star on the wall. She was saying "SEE STAR!"

Another delightful visitor was Haven, Big Sur's foremost authority on Tinker Toys. His Nana, Paige, brought him to spend time with the horses. She hadn't known about the sanctuary until the day of our March fundraiser at Mopane. Paige followed the sound of soulful African drumming by Tam Tam Sacrée. She entered the raffle and won the prize: a picnic for two at the sanctuary prepared by our master chef, Edwin Salinas! When Haven saw Peanut drinking water from the trough, he tried to drink lemonade from his cup the same way.

Kiva is as focused on watching over his herd as Haven is on supervising construction equipment. So we stood in wonder as we watched them give each other their undivided attention. Kiva lowered his head - which is almost as big as Haven's whole body - and made the boy laugh with affectionate, gentle nudges.

The Sea Star horses were also visited by young adults, Kallista and Sofia. Both girls have experience with horses, which showed in the ease with which they handled them. They also did not shy away from the work that's required for their care. Sharon spoke with Sofia about returning to do community service with the horses. (IB and AP students with community service requirements in their degree programs are welcome to contact us about the possibility of putting in some hours at the sanctuary.)

Children are naturally drawn to animals. For many little ones, a plush toy elephant, bear, dog, or bunny was their first best friend. From our perspective, animals are drawn to children too. The horses seem to respond to the presence of children with an even exchange of energy, innocence, pure love, and goodness. The sanctuary believes it is essential to nurture this connection, instilling a life-long sense of respect and awe for equines. This goes hand in hand with understanding our responsibilities as stewards of these animals and of the earth we all call home.

Help us sustain relationships like these for years to come.
Donate at www.seastarhorsesanctuary.org

We welcome children and adults alike to spend time outside with the horses in their natural environment. The horses flourish with this attention and care. We believe that connecting in this way is deeply nourishing and necessary for horses and humans.

Anyone who visits the Sanctuary will tell you: There's just something special about this place. Located on the coast between Carmel and Big Sur, California, our sanctuary is home to ten remarkable horses. Visiting the Sanctuary is a relaxing, personal way to meet the herd and learn more about our amazing stories of horse rescue and rehabilitation.

Visits are by appointment only and are offered Monday through Saturday between the hours of 11:00am – 2:00pm. Each visit lasts approximately two hours as you are guided around the property and meet each member of the herd. We appreciate the opportunity to inspire a deeper understanding of these sensitive, spirited beings. Although this private visit is offered free of charge, we are deeply grateful for your contribution to the horses. To make arrangements for your personal visit please contact Sharon at info@seastarhorsesanctuary.org

BRAVESTAR SHINES

Bravestar has been described as possessing strength that instills calm. It comes natural to her and is one of the attributes that makes her an ideal lead mare.

Bravestar was already at the sanctuary when we learned that the breeder was going to send three of her siblings to Mexico. When her brother, Stuey, and sisters, Peanut & Peppy, arrived at the sanctuary, they had clearly been neglected. Bravestar never suffered those injustices, which may be one explanation for her calm and balance.

As lead mare and lead gelding, Bravestar & Kiva have to be first. The herd doesn't dispute this. In exchange for this privilege comes their dedication to protecting the others. These are the natural herd dynamics of horses, the instinctive behavior of prey animals. No matter how tired Kiva gets from standing watch as the herd sleeps, he resists giving into it. We have watched him begin to lie down on one side, then the other, then change his mind and stay on duty. We often wish he would just give into it and rest, but that's not his nature. Kiva is all about protection.

If Kiva does need to let down his guard, we have noticed that Bravestar makes it possible for him. At times when he seems impervious to holistic healing sessions, it changes if Bravestar stands beside him. It's the job of the lead female to take care of the herd in the absence of the lead male. With Bravestar alert and present, Kiva is able to relax and receive the benefits of acupuncture, energy work, or medicinal plants.

From our view point, it's as if Bravestar assures Kiva that she's got his back. His confidence in her lightens his load because he knows the herd is in good hands. They love each other, which they demonstrate daily with affectionate nuzzling and grooming. As they breath together, side by side, Kiva opens himself to relaxation, release, and healing because Bravestar's strength instills calm.

"Bentley"

-a poem by volunteer Charlie Deweese

On a hill by the sea, grazing green grass,
a little round brown pony stands.
He no longer hears the call of cruel words
or endures the touch of harsh hands.

His home is a haven where healing is done,
a chapel of kindness and love,
Where pine and oak sigh in the wind and give shade
with gray mist and blue sky above.

Does he remember the dark in his past
a time with his life almost taken,
Does he still feel the fear of his fate
but by grace he was not forsaken.

He is not alone in this place of goodwill,
there are others with sad stories too.
But here that has ended, here they find peace
and a chance to begin life anew.

His friendship cannot be easily won,
he must know you well to forgive.
But his heart is now open, he's learning to trust
and find joy in a new life to live.

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

“Here I had been offering healing to the horses, while all along they were healing me too.”

When volunteer Mary Roos began positioning her hands along Seastar’s body, his demeanor and overall energy seemed to shift, sway, and change. Mary touched the top of his head and hovered in this area where the energy center called the crown chakra resides. In this moment, Seastar’s ears softened back, his eyes blinked deeply and heavily, and his bottom lip visibly quivered.
Mary is a Healing Touch for Animals (HTA) practitioner who offers her service and heart to the Sea Star horses every week. She is also the HTA coordinator for Northern California responsible for bringing the modality’s certification courses to the sanctuary. Healing Touch for Animals is described as a safe, gentle, and natural approach to animal health and wellness. The techniques aim to clear, balance, and strengthen the animal’s energy body so that the animal’s physical body and mind can self-regulate. Often the first response noticed in a HTA session is relaxation. It seems that Seastar was deep in the relaxation zone!

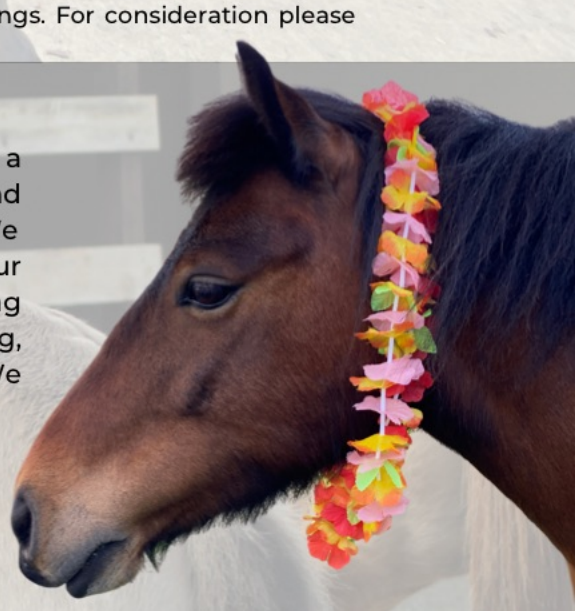
We asked Mary to share a little of the journey that brought her and HTA to the Sea Star Horse Sanctuary:
“I am a certified Massage Therapist for humans and I made the decision to step into the animal world after nursing our beloved Boxer, Bella, as she transitioned from this world. I started studying with Healing Touch for Animals 7 years ago. I was trained in Canine Massage and was seeking to expand my practice to include an energy modality to support the healing process in animals.”

“I started volunteering at the SPCA working with the dogs and horses. I saw a marked difference at the end of the session in the animals I was providing Healing Touch for. I also assisted with the many animals that were housed at the fairgrounds during the fires a few years ago. They were frightened and away from their owners. The Healing Touch seemed to calm them.
“In addition to volunteering at Sea Star Horse Sanctuary, I also volunteer at POMDR’s veterinary clinic in Monterey. Many of the dogs can be very nervous, frightened or in pain. I provide the gentle Healing Touch to soothe their anxiety. It was there that my sweet doggie, Tibi, appeared and I knew he would find his forever home with me! He now enjoys my loving Healing Touch every day!”
Mary discovered Sea Star Horse Sanctuary while searching for a stable to host the large animal part of the two and a half day course.* She describes the sanctuary grounds as “pure magic!” Most of the holistic healing sessions at the sanctuary are offered to the horses at liberty in nature. “Being in the upper pasture together in total serenity and stillness....It is just sheer love! I am humbled by each horse’s generous spirit and openness to receive this loving, healing touch.”

While recovering from a near fatal accident, Mary needed to take a respite from offering Healing Touch, but she continued to visit with the horses in that same upper pasture for weeks. The accident had taken its toll on her body, mind, and spirit and by being with the horses, she started to feel better. One day while standing close to Seastar, a profound realization washed over her: “Here I had been offering healing to the horses, while all along they were healing me too.”
*Sea Star Horse Sanctuary has hosted two HTA Level-1 large animal classes thus far and will host a Level-2 class in May, Level-3 in August, and Level-4 in October. Sea Star Horse Sanctuary hosts horse and healing-related workshops and trainings. For consideration please contact Sharon at info@seastarhorsesanctuary.com

WHO WE ARE

Founded by Sharon Regan in 2017, Sea Star Horse Sanctuary is a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to providing exceptional care and lifetime sanctuary to abused, abandoned, and neglected horses. We believe in nurturing the body, mind, and soul of each horse in our loving care. We strive to cultivate “horse wholeness” by providing comprehensive veterinary care, specialized nutrition, natural training, connection-based grooming techniques and holistic care. We respect and honor the essence of the equine spirit.



www.seastarhorsesanctuary.org
info@seastarhorsesanctuary.org
831.595.2185