

# *Hoofprints of Love*

**JANUARY 2017**

**BEGIN AGAIN FARMS, INC. EQUINE SHELTER**



## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**MEMORIAL RIDE: APRIL 29, 2017**

**HOEDOWN, SEPTEMBER 29, 2017**

## Max's Corner: An Eye on the Farm

*Max is the spokeshorse for Begin Again Farms, Inc. You can always see him standing on the corner, watching everything that is going on.*

Hay again!

I know, I know, it's been WAY too long since you have heard from me. I would hang my head in shame, but since I am plastic my joints don't work well, or rather at all. So I have instructed my editor to do it for me.

We've got some changes to the newsletter and website underway as well:

You will no longer find HORSES FOR ADOPTION in the newsletter. We ask instead that you go directly to Petfinder.com, or to our website [www.beginagainfarms.com](http://www.beginagainfarms.com), which will redirect you to Petfinder. We will, however, still be listing our horses for Sponsorship in the newsletter. We have two types of sponsorships—for those who due to age or disability cannot be adopted, and those who are up for adoption and need financial assistance. More on that later in the newsletter.

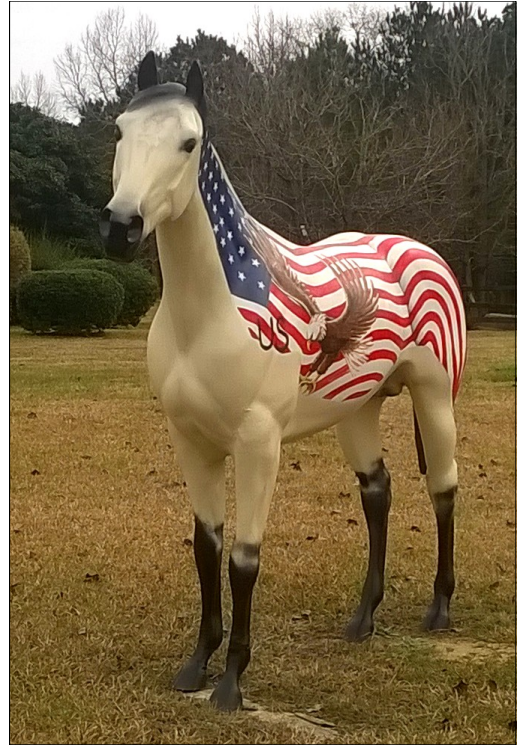
Check out the new **BLOG** on our website, [www.beginagainfarms.com](http://www.beginagainfarms.com). Be sure to read about how BAFI has changed the lives of our volunteers and friends, and how the Farm got its start.

Speaking of HAY, the drought this summer has caused a shortage in hay and an increase in prices for hay. We hopefully have enough to last until this year's first cutting, weather permitting, even though we had to pay an extra \$20 per round bale for delivery from southern Georgia. Horses started eating the hay earlier than usual in the late summer and fall because, with no rain, the grass wasn't growing. We planted rye grass in all the paddocks and the big field in the fall, and it is started coming up around the end of December, to the delight of all our horses. We are hoping that the weather will cooperate for the grass so that we won't have to feed as much hay.

Begin Again Farms is grateful for our wonderful volunteers who take up the slack when others have mending bones or surgery!

*(continued on following page)*

**COVER PHOTO: "AFTER THE STORM" by Lisa Palmer**



*Hoofprints of Love* is the newsletter of Begin Again Farms, Inc., a 501c-3 equine rescue in Ellerslie, GA.

If you are not on our e-mail list for the newsletter and upcoming events, please contact:

[reusmannl@bellsouth.net](mailto:reusmannl@bellsouth.net)

# MAX'S COLUMN *(continued from previous page)*

Once again, BAFI has been privileged to host a boy scout troop to help them earn their horsemanship badges. They groomed and rode horses and learned basic horse care. In addition, they helped with some of the chores around the farm, including the all-important cuddling with cats.



We have FOUR new run-in sheds. Many thanks to our supporters Alice and John Sands, who donated two run-in sheds to replace the two that had been severely damaged by terrible wind storms.

Thank you also to Alex Simpson of Boy Scout troop #107, who built us another run-in shed as an Eagle Scout project.

We sadly lost three of our long-term supporters this year: Carol Edwards, Cecilia Wallace and Colette Plourde (see page 6). Donations in their memory contributed to the building of the fourth shed.

In addition we would like to thank John Kearns and his family to adding windbreaks to some of our sheds.

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## MAX'S COLUMN *(continued from previous page)*

All the horses need to be wormed regularly, including measuring weight for the proper dosage. Some of the horses are more willing to be caught and wormed than others. Volunteers get tired.



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### **Cooper's General Store**

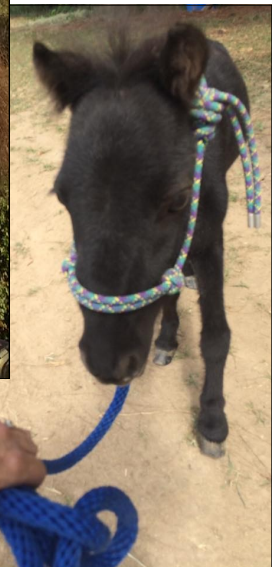
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## MAX'S COLUMN *(continued from page 5)*

New arrivals often need special care. This is Rocky. He is about one year old, lived in a dog run, never had his feet trimmed, his mane was severely matted and he was malnourished when he arrived. He had no training but has learned to lead and was even in good enough condition to walk the short Waverly Hall Christmas parade. He is a very sweet boy that loves attention, and he has won the hearts of everyone that sees him. Special thanks to Keith Seeley for his special and frequent work on Rocky's feet. Welcome to your new life, little Rocky!



# RIP, Dear Friends

**Cecilia Wallace**



**Coulette Plourde**

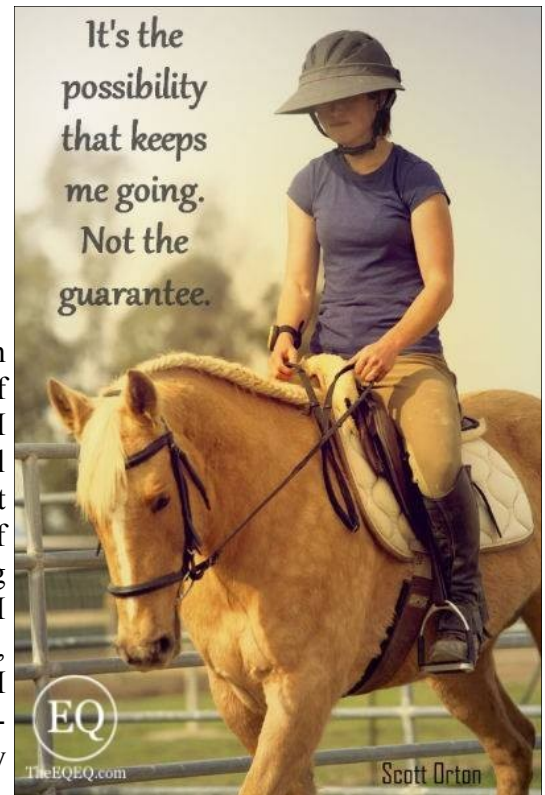
**Carol Ann Edwards**



# On the Trail....

*By Alice Stagg*

Are you a coachable person? I came across an article on Xenophon Equus Center's website not long ago that was entitled "5 Qualities of the Coachable Rider". I was so impressed with the message that I shared it with a few horsey friends. I got back responses from several that said, "This could apply to any person, not just a rider". So right they are. I wish I was articulate enough to synthesize the essence of coach-ability as well as the author did. Well, I'm not, so I'm sharing it here and hope it speaks to every reader as strongly as it did to me. I will say that I believe that my experiences in riding for my mentor, Jeff Moore, over the past 30 years, have strengthened the qualities I already had and instilled those I was lacking. I have included personal comments following each numbered paragraph that reflect my journey.



**Openness: Are you open to receiving feedback, even if it's difficult to listen to? Or are you more likely to shut down to save face? Fear can lock us all up from changing. Some riders can get too invested in playing a certain role in lessons, and in essence taking themselves too seriously. Strive to be loose rather than rigid with your expectations. A dash of humor about your weaknesses can really open the door to increased relaxation and progress.**

Early in my training with Jeff, I had an experience during a lesson that proved to be a watershed moment. I was riding a difficult, fussy, inattentive horse and I was constantly making adjustments and corrections trying to cover up the problems and put on a pretty picture. Well, Jeff saw right through that and at the end of that day's lesson said very bluntly "The problem is that this horse isn't broke. He's a saggy backed, ill-mannered bully and you are trying to cover it all up instead of facing the problems head on and addressing them in a sensible way." OUCH! Nobody had ever spoken to me like that and I thought I was a pretty good hand with a horse, having a strong background and many championships in the eventing world. This horse was totally unlike any other horse I had ever ridden though, and his issues really exposed my own weaknesses. I huffed and pouted and walked back to the barn red-faced and embarrassed to have been called out in front of the spectators. As I stripped off the tack and groomed the horse, I thought about what Jeff had said, and realized how correct he had been. With that realization came acceptance and understanding, and our next lessons were very successful as Jeff gave me the tools and techniques I would need to take home and continue working to improve this horse. This one experience gave me a successful jumping off point from which I could develop my own skills.

**Humility: The Zen tradition states that the best student is one with "beginner's mind". That is to say that the notion of "expert" is tossed in favor of the attitude of a "perpetual learner". Sometimes riders can get too caught up in what they know, or think they know. Suspension of judgment and openness to experimentation can lead to important insights. Try clearing your mind of preconceived notions the next time you head out on a ride. Be a beginner again and see where it leads.**

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## On The Trail *(continued from previous page)*

From Jeff I have learned to be experimental. Be whimsical. Every ride is a clean slate where you should be listening to your horse to gauge how it feels that day, and then develop your plan for the ride based on what feedback you are getting. Be willing to recant and revise. Horses are not automatons. They have good and bad days, aches and pains, fears and feelings. Be aware of this and adjust your expectations accordingly, so that each ride is pleasant for both you and the horse, and ends on a good note.

**Desire: This quality makes itself known in a myriad of ways. Most importantly though, desire shows itself in commitment. Are you consistent with your commitments to your riding and your coach? Are you on time for lessons? Do you know the “why” behind your riding – what drives your motivation?**

When someone asks me if I will take them on as a student, I first try to find out from them what they want to accomplish. I want to get a sense of how dedicated they will be to learning. I email them a series of articles that I ask them to read before our first lesson so they may be better prepared to understand some of the terms I will use. I can tell when it comes time for that lesson whether or not they have done the homework as requested. Those who have not do not usually stick with the lessons very long. To me, riding is not just crawling on a horse and taking off. It is a lifetime of learning and it is hard work to develop the skills that make you and your horse a good team.

**Willingness: Think of it this way: would you rather ride a horse that is difficult to get through to, or one that is willing to listen? The willing horse saves your energy and learns at a faster rate. It’s the same with students. A rider who is for some reason closed to the idea of being guided or directed creates extra work for a coach. This tendency also wears a relationship thin. You may not always agree with what you are being asked to do, but as long as you trust in the knowledge of your trainer as a whole you should be willing to try.**

When someone asks me about riding for Jeff in one of the clinics I organize, the first thing I tell them is that he is happy to work with any type of rider and any horse. As long as the rider comes with an open mind and will try their best to do what is being asked, Jeff will give his all to them. I feel the same way. I have seen riders come into the clinic who seem to have a chip on their shoulder – arguing with Jeff over everything, objecting to changing their position or asking their horse to change in any way. These people never come back, and I’m glad of it, though I’m sorry for them and their horses that they have

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## On The Trail *(continued from previous page)*

missed such a golden opportunity to learn. That is no way to approach the learning experience. A good trainer will encourage their students to ask questions and will be happy to explain and clarify. Sometimes though, you just have to put your trust in them and take a leap of faith to see results.

**Discipline: Discipline is another way of saying you have the skill of self-control. You can apply order to your daily tasks, even make yourself do things you really don't want to do. One or two hours a week with a coach will not turn you into an effective rider. Coaches love students who come back for the next lesson having applied some of their learning on their own time. This is perhaps the hallmark of a coachable student; one who is able to coach themselves.**

A horse learns retrospectively and by repetition. The horse can learn good or bad things, but that is the way they process information. The rider learns by repetition also; by creating or revising muscle memory through practice. That said, it is very important not to grind a horse into the ground with practice and repetition. Mix up what you do in each ride. Make it interesting for the horse so it does not shut down and never see light at the end of the tunnel. If you have the facilities for it, alternate ring work with light trail rides, and mix in some training moves you would normally do in the ring while you're on the trail. Be thoughtful. Make notes after your lessons while the information is fresh in your mind. Read them over before your next ride. Prioritize the three things that are most important for you to remember as you work a movement. Plan ahead and don't expect your horse to be a mind reader. Coaches really feel great when their students come into the lesson and can demonstrate that they have made an effort to work on some aspect of their training from the previous lesson. To me, that is the greatest reward of all for the investment of my time in them.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

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## SPONSORSHIP

Help a horse at Begin Again Farms with a sponsorship for one of our unadoptable horses. You can spend as much or as little time with your sponsored horse as you wish.

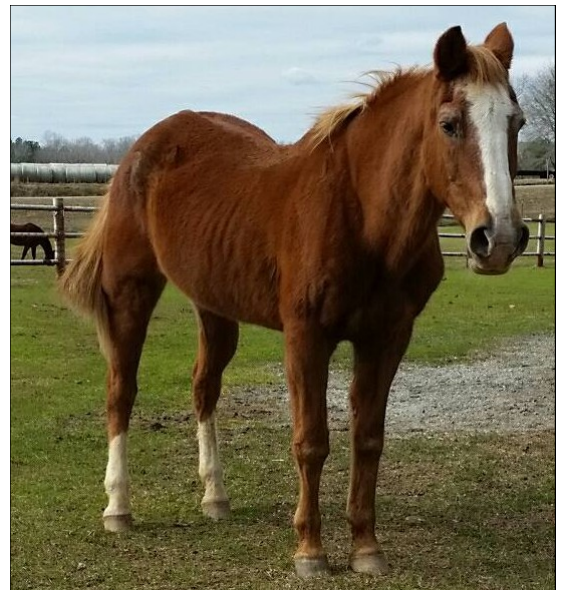
Currently, Begin Again Farms has 35 unadoptable horses, either due to age or disability. Some may be adoptable after health issues are resolved. 24 already are sponsored, one has a partial sponsorship. That leaves 12 horses in need of financial assistance for their remaining years. Most of them would also like to have their own “special” person to give them the love and attention they deserve.

Sponsorships are also available for adoptable horses. This would be a wonderful investment for corporations or other businesses that like to work with the community. For more information about sponsorship, please contact Rhonda at 706-315-6945.

Here are some of our horses that need sponsorship:

**\*NEW\* - GINGER**—Ginger is a lovely chestnut mare, full of energy in pep. She is in her 20s, and has some back or hip issues. She is a bit too much “in your face” and needs some work on being respectful, but she likes people, and she would make a good project for someone experienced with horses. (***Pictured right***)

**COCOA**—Young black mare, very sweet.. Cocoa is blind in one eye and cannot see well out of the other.



**IZZY**—Dun stallion, very good natured. Will never be able to be ridden due to foalhood injury. Izzy has a partial (financial only) sponsorship.

**LENA**—Beautiful bay Quarter Horse/Paint with lots of color. Not very trusting. Has COPD.

**PRINCESS**—(***Pictured left***) - Pinto miniature horse mare. She is a shy little mare, but much better than she was. Not mean, loves to be groomed. Not broke to ride. Leads and loads well.

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## SPONSORSHIP

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**MISTY**—Sweet black small pony. She is easy to catch and lead and groom. She's carried a small child on her back with a lead line. ***(Pictured right with her best buddy Boo)***

**PEANUT**—Anyone who has spent time at the Farm knows Peanut the million dollar pony. He is our primary Education animal, and goes out to schools, parades and other functions, gives children their first riding experience.



**POGO**—A darling older miniature horse. Loves grooming and treats. ***(Pictured left, with Spotless the cat)***

**SAVANNAH**—She is like some of our volunteers in that she is getting older, but refuses to believe it. She is an intelligent white mare.

**STANLEY**—This buckskin is a retired cattle horse, and likes to be in the midst of attention. He can be ridden, but does have a few quirks that most experienced riders can deal with.

**WILDFIRE**—Gentle chestnut mare, blind in one eye (it had to be removed). Has ulcers, but under control since removed from stressful situation. Prefers ponies and/or minis as her pasture mates. ***(Pictured right)***



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**FRIDAY EVENING**  
**SEPTEMBER 29, 2017**

# GOODBYE OLD FRIENDS



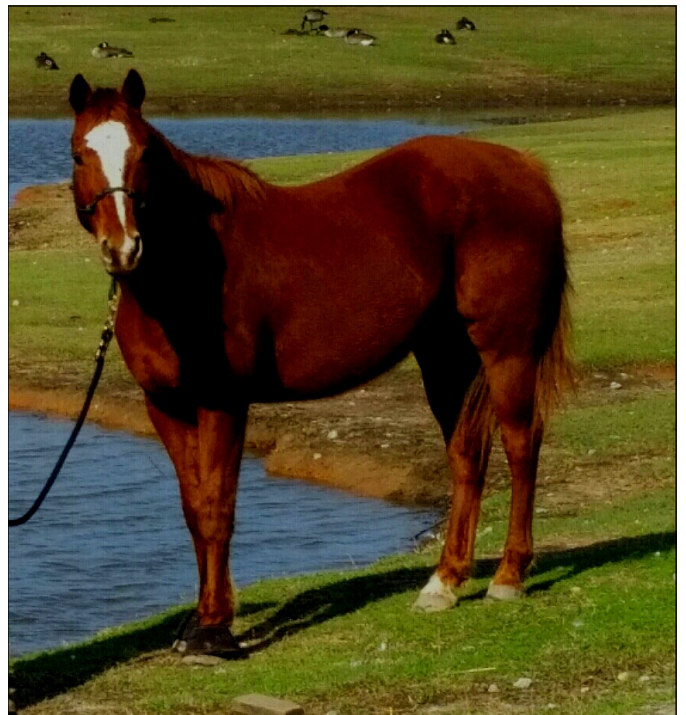
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## Adopters Send Their Pictures

### Adopted

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**Tools and Equipment:**

Any kind of yard tools  
Steel T-Posts—6'  
Any Size Gates  
Hog or Horse Wire  
Treated Lumber any size  
Power tools

**Help:**

Electrician to do minor repair work

**Tack:**

Any new or used saddles &  
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Horse Blankets  
Easy entry miniature horse cart

**Event Needs:**

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**Looking for an easy way to help  
Begin Again Farms?**

**Print this newsletter and hang a copy  
in the break room of your office of  
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**Spreading the word about Begin  
Again Farms is a huge help to us!**