

Hoofprints of Love

OCTOBER 2016

BEGIN AGAIN FARMS, INC. EQUINE SHELTER



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

CONTENTS

		Goodbye, Old Friends	18
Max's Corner	2	Adopted, Fostered, Adoption Pics	19
	3	For Adoption—Donkeys, Mules, Ponies	20
Memorial Ride Thank You's	8	For Adoption—Horses	21
The Trails	9	Wish List	27
The Obstacles	10	Volunteer Opportunities	29
Sponsorship	16		

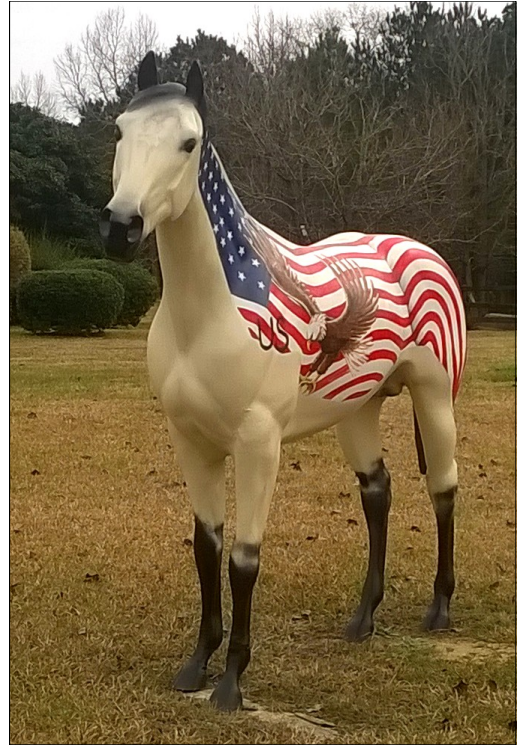
Max's Corner: An Eye on the Farm

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!

Once more it is time for our **ANNUAL RESCUE RIDE**, one of our two biggest fund-raisers of the year. While we are once again opening six miles of beautiful trails and our challenging obstacle course, we are having a **HUGE GARAGE SALE** instead of a silent auction. We need your support at this event! Horses are expensive to keep, with hay, individual diets, veterinary costs (this year higher than normal) and farrier expenses. Be sure to bring your non-riding friends for the garage sale and to see our wonderful horses.

We have a new **BLOG** on our website, www.beginagainfarms.com. Be sure to read about how BAFI has changed the lives of our volunteers and friends.



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.



(continued on following page)

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

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

Baling and putting up hay has kept our volunteers busy.



(continued on following page)

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

And then 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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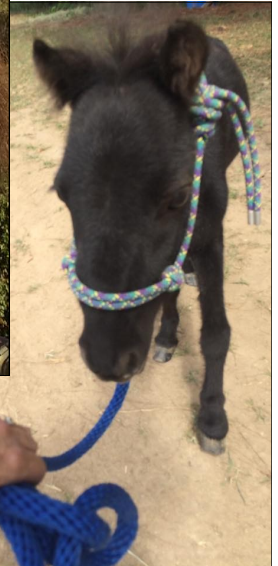
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MAX'S COLUMN *(continued from page 5)*

And then there are new arrivals that need extra care. This is Rocky, our newest addition. He is about one year old, lived in a dog run, never had his feet trimmed, his mane was severely matted and he is underweight. He has had no training and is now just learning how to be led. Despite that, he is a very sweet boy that loves attention, and he has won the hearts of everyone that sees him. It will be awhile until he is available for adoption. Welcome to your new life, little Rocky!

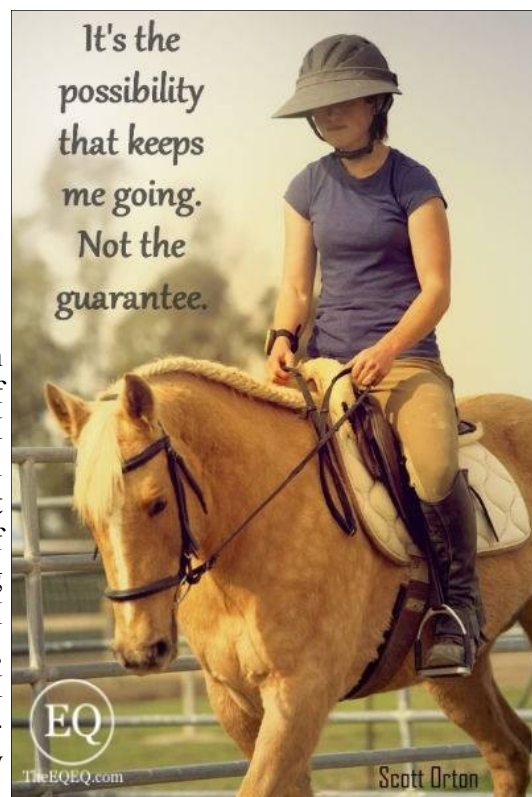


Rescue Ride page

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.



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.

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

HANDSOME—Gorgeous white horse with major fear issues.

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.

MISTY—(*Pictured right*) 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.



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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PICKLEENA—registered bay Quarter Horse mare, 21 years old and going strong. She's had tons of training, but can be cold-backed. This mare knows a lot. Experienced rider only.

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

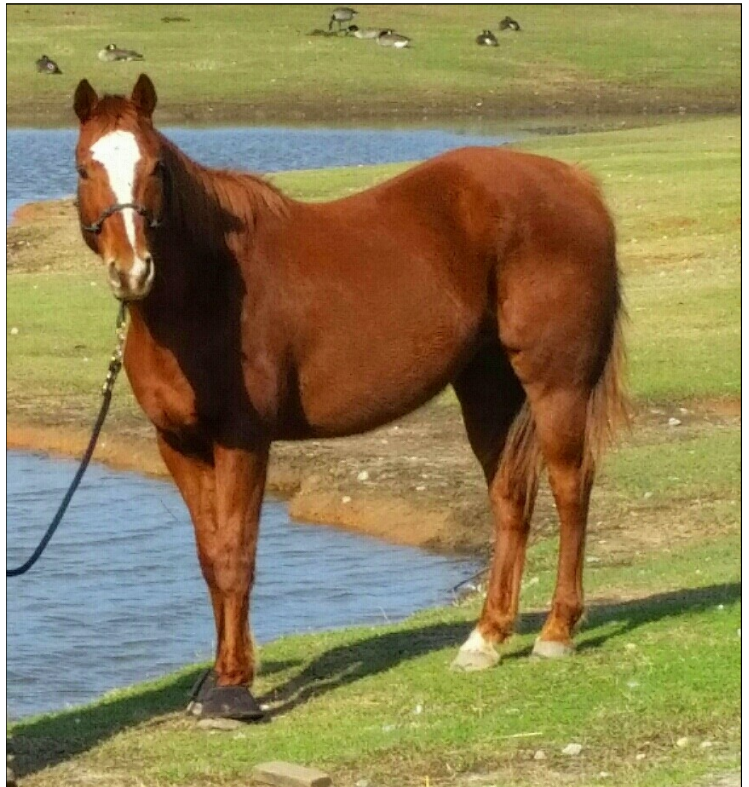
WILDFIRE—Gentle chestnut mare, blind in one eye (it had to be removed). Has ulcers, but under control since removed from stressful situation. Prefers ponies and/or minis as her pasture mates. *(Pictured below)*



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SPONSORSHIP— Please contact Rhonda at 706-315-6945

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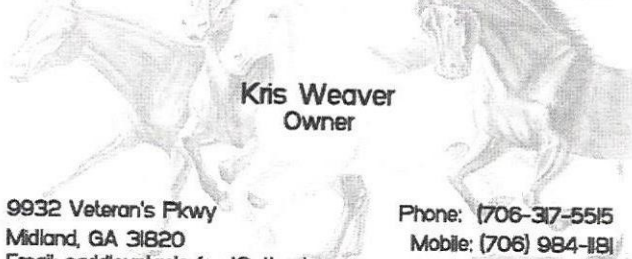
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Tools and Equipment:

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Any Size Gates
Hog or Horse Wire
Treated Lumber any size
Power tools

Help:

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Tack:

Any new or used saddles &
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Horse Blankets
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Also:

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**Spreading the word about Begin
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