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Fiscal Year 2022
Annual Report
It is an honor to work with the animals in our herd. The horses, donkeys (and cats) partner with us in this healing endeavor at the farm guiding our clients forward in their life challenges. The reality of working with our beloved animal partners though is that their life cycles often move in tighter circles than our own. We celebrate the joy their life brings to this work and we experience the deep feelings of loss with their departure.

In September of 2021 we said goodbye to Lily, a pony who dedicated her life to therapy and served alongside us for 15 years with heart, humor and sass. Her death felt immobilizing to us but those who knew Lily understood that she did not tolerate immobility. In a client session with a child on her back she would shift her weight allowing the client to reposition their body in just the right way. On the ground she gave a nudge with her nose or tug on the lead to create movement in the direction of new learning. When she died, we briefly froze in our tracks, and then in a classic Lily move, we were head butted forward into a year of growth.

Lily’s empty paddock was soon filled by two miniature donkeys (a gift from our veterinarian). These little equines, Rose and Ida forced our hearts to swell with love and laughter. Capacity building funds from the Brachman Family helped us hire a director of operations, a clinical manager and more clinical staff to provide direct client services. This spurred some long-anticipated organizational development that has brought us a skilled leadership team, property, horse and clinical teams and specialized task forces (with room for volunteers!) to help move us forward. Staff roles are becoming clarified and we have implemented a new health records system. Our board of directors updated our strategic plan and began a fresh start to oversight and governance. In other words, Hold Your Horses is moving from our organic beginning into a growth phase that will set us up for years to come.

With growth comes some discomfort. We now have 12 employees sharing 3 office spaces. Our lunch room doubles as a conference room, the entry area is both OT gym and client waiting room. The barn aisle doubles as client treatment space and horse prep area. The arena is both treatment space, classroom and horse conditioning ring. In the warm summer months we can sprawl across the beauty of our 69 acres lovingly cared for by our property management team and envisioned by a gift of site design by Coen+Partners. In winter though, we begin the dance of working in smaller, shared spaces. Stay tuned for more growth plans. They are coming.

When I started this organization with Lily, two horses and six weekly clients my vision was guided by dedication to the work and love for the horse. Although we have said farewell to many of our animal partners since then, our team today of 10 equines, twelve staff members and twenty five volunteers weaves a beautiful web of support for as many as forty five clients each week. We are growing. We are dedicated to our healing work and nurturing the beauty and bounty of this property. As we grow and broaden our vision we thank you for supporting us on this journey and sharing the joy and the grief as we get nudged lovingly into the future.

- Janet Weisberg, MS OTR/L HPCS, Founding Director

Note from the Treasurer’s Desk

Fiscal year 2022 saw the beginning of a “return to normal”, as programming and some fundraising events steadily returned to in person. COVID continued to present some challenges, but we continued to adapt and focus on the needs of our clients. We are thankful for the continued support from our donors and community partners, and very excited about the new relationships cultivated this past year. As a result of the generosity shown, Hold Your Horses has been able to invest in additional staffing to help grow our programming, and also reallocate staffing resources to dream about the future of Hold Your Horses.

- Chad Lassen, Treasurer

FY 2022 Board of Directors

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A year at the farm
by the numbers

25,000 steps a day by an OT providing Hippotherapy

3500 lbs of manure every week

56 hours of mowing in one summer month

5 Christmas Trees consumed by 2 donkeys

2 Educational Events: 70 people attending the PATH, Intl. Region 6 Conference

1200 bales of hay consumed in one year by 8 horses

2000 client sessions in 1 year

15 people attending Healing the Herd with Linda Kohanov and Dr. Rebecca Bailey

12 part-time staff (3 new this year)
2 full-time staff (1 new this year)
25 volunteers (10 new this year)
Poetry and Praise from Clients

Strawberries, peaches, walks by the moonlight.  
Horses that know all about you,  
cinnamon, Holy Water on the forehead. Only what's left. 
The dying and the dead. Guitars, art on walls, popsicles.  
They say you can rewire your brain with three gratefuls a day.  
Ocean waves, stained glass windows, archways of doors.  
I don't know too much about this life.  
Hard wood floors, the sound of crickets, reins in my hands.  
The world is exploding.  
Oversized pillows, hand crocheted throws, the sun breaking dawn.  
Wars upon wars upon wars upon wars...  
Miniature donkeys, people there to help, a paint brush among my fingers.  
Ballet figurines, sprinklers, music to smooth out the wrinkles.  
Birds in flight, a farm along the road,  
the soul ready and willing to grow.

I wanted to say and thank everyone here at hold your horses because, this was such a great journey for me. I will miss everyone here, even the horses, the donkeys, and the cute cats here, maybe not so much the insects, But I hope we can come back some time and visit again.

I am quite sad that we are done but I'm also happy I got to experience these things with Katie, Barb, and Molly. To be honest I was really nervous to be here at the start but later in time while I was coming here I got really comfortable. Not only do I see as someone who is helping me mentally and physically, but I saw u guys as part of my family. Thank you so much, I will forever be grateful of being here. I love you all and I will miss you all <3.