

THE Latham Letter

VOLUME XLII, NUMBER 1

Winter 2021

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION



HORSES OF HOPE

By Nikki Ingersoll
Page 7



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MANDATE

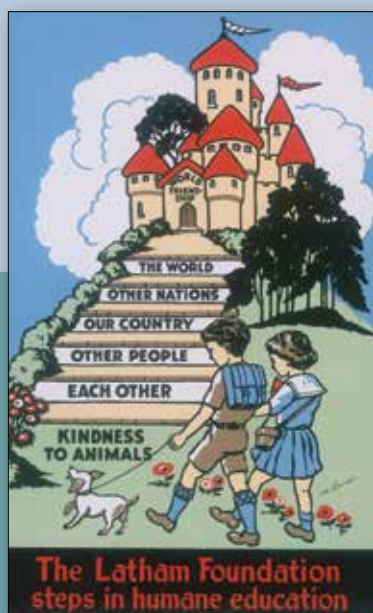
Edith Latham's **MANDATE:**

"To promote, foster,
encourage and
further the
principles of
humaneness,
kindness and
benevolence to
all living creatures."



WELCOME BACK, BROTHER BUZZ!

Brother Buzz, star of
Latham's Brother Buzz films,
and our former Spokesbee,
now marks the end of articles.



The Latham Letter

Balanced perspectives on humane issues and activities

Search the *Latham Letter* archives by topic and learn
more about all of our resources and grants at
www.Latham.org or call 510-521-0920.



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Promotion of Humane Education*

The Latham Letter

Volume XLII, Number 1 Winter 2021

**BALANCED PERSPECTIVES ON
HUMANE ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES**



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Latham welcomes partnerships with other institutions and
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education.

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Hugh H. Tebault, President

EXPECTATIONS FOR 2021

In each of our lives, we build our experiences and expectations about the world around us. For our immediate relationships—our family, pets, and neighbors—we develop the interactions and enjoy the experiences. For our community and employment, we find our talents and locate a community of interest where we can enjoy work, interact with those around us, and find satisfaction in gainful employment. We forge social contracts on how we live and work. For our government, we elect representatives to whom we give limited duties under the Constitution. This is our national social contract. We also have expectations of a common language using the same word definitions to clearly understand each other. When definitions get changed, it becomes harder to truly communicate.

When this is all in balance, our expectations are met. We have stability in our lives, and we can each increase our freedom by building our financial independence to obtain our goals—goals like raising our children and providing them a better life, helping others in our community, taking vacations, saving for retirement, and finding a job we enjoy.


When the established social contract is breached by having the economy shut down, our society is no longer secure. This puts huge pressures on everyone and on every aspect of what was normal. We still need to recognize that our social contract expectation of a stable, respectful, society is the norm. This massive disruption is not. When you have a contract, and the other person violates it, you have a righteous cause to regain your contractual rights.

Please remember that your expectations in 2019 for 2020 were accurate. In the USA we had high employment, successful conditions and a strong economy

because of each of our individual successes. This massive violation of our social contract by the government locking down our economy and ordering our behavior is not normal. It is against the very Constitution we created where the government works for the people, not the people for the government, and where people are responsible for making wise decisions for themselves.

My father and I were both in the US Air Force. Military veterans in America who volunteered or were drafted have taken this oath “I, (NAME), do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God.” When a veteran retires from military service, he/she still lives to honor that oath. We work in our own communities and with our neighbors. When we see injustice we do what we can to alleviate it. Please do the same in your own communities.

Latham Foundation’s principles of showing kindness (respect) to animals, to each other, other people, our country, other nations and the world still stand as the best framework for success. But they depend on shared expectations. In the United States it is based on the Constitution and rule of law. For our success we need to restore our society; we need to reestablish our existing social contract and reimpose the Constitution and rule of law so that each and every one may again be successful and free.

Freedom is not free; it is built on our individual responsibilities. 

From our readers:

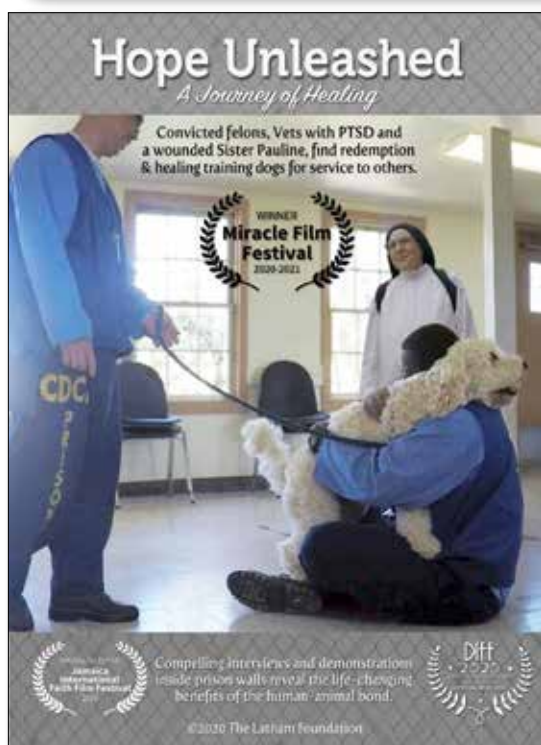
From the folks at Gryphon Press (Picture books celebrating the human-animal bond)
Congratulations on a stellar issue! The content is inspiring and I love the freedom to use color! Love the new fall palette and all the articles. [The Gryphon Press](#)

Hi, everyone – just a quick note to commend everyone on the latest Latham Letter. The graphics in particular are outstanding! Nice job!

I am always SO astounded at the work that goes into your Latham Letters. IT IS SIMPLY SPECTACULAR! And so educational and very beautiful too.

Thank you for what you and all the team there at Latham do.

Honestly, it's the best reading material out there.



Hope Unleashed is a Winner!

To the Miracle Film Festival team,

We wanted to share an amazing film with you, “Hope Unleashed” by Tula Asselanis. This film was our grand prize winner for the Miracle Film Festival, and we feel that it reflects our theme through the miracles of charity work and human-animal bonding. This award is in honor of Sister Pauline, who dedicated her life to the work you see depicted in the film. She passed away last March due to cancer.

If you would like to help support the filmmakers behind this project and pay a \$2 fee to watch the full film, check it out here vimeo.com/ondemand/hopeunleashedextended

If you would like to watch a 21-minute version of the film for free, you can view that here: vimeo.com/445392203

A special tribute to our good friend and animal lover George Gerdes who died unexpectedly January 1st. George donated his musical talents to several of our films including:

Pit Bull Paradox

Breaking the Cycles of Violence II

and *Who Rescued Whom?*

He will be missed.



Correct link for Molly's story is:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYu_tXeH6Ds&t=29s

In Honor of Laura Thompson



Long-time Latham Director and a leading advocate for Hawaii's natural and cultural resources, Laura Kalaukapu Low Lucas Thompson died peacefully at her home in Niu Valley, Hawaii, where she was born and raised. She was 95 years old.

"She was really from the old Hawaii," said her son Nainoa, a master navigator and president of the Polynesian Voyaging Society, on whose board his mother and father, the late Myron B. "Pinky" Thompson, long served.

In his mother's house, if a centipede ran across the floor, you didn't kill it, Thompson said, adding the doors were never locked, but left open to all. "Mom and Daddy took in every kid, everybody who needed food, shelter or a listening ear," said her daughter, Lita Thompson Blankenfeld." Her mother also looked after the family's horses, cows, dogs, cats, chickens, rabbits, white mice and birds, said Blankenfeld, a dispatcher for Hawaiian Airlines.

"When I think of my mom, the first word that comes to me is kindness," said her son Myron K. Thompson, owner of a solar energy company. "People always knew they would be welcomed when they saw Laura Thompson, and that's exactly what's coming back to us now, all these people telling us stories about how Mom had helped them."

"Kalaukapu, to hold the leaf sacred, captured the essence of who she was," Thompson said of his

mother's Hawaiian name, bestowed by her grandmother. "She respected and took responsibility to protect all living things."

Thompson also served as president and chairwoman of the Hawaiian Humane Society, conservation chairwoman for the Papahānaumokuākea Reserve Advisory Committee, and on many boards of directors, including those of The Nature Conservancy Hawaii, Planned Parenthood of Hawaii, Hawaii Nature Center, the American Humane Association and the Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education.

She was raised as an only child, and her best friend was her horse, Huapala. "The horse was her best friend because it would never abandon her," Nainoa Thompson said.

Quiet, patient, and skilled at bringing people with disparate points of view to the table, Thompson could also be decisive, friends said. When she spoke, one would be wise to listen. Blankenfeld said her mother paid attention to people: "She never lectured, she just trusted that you'd do what you needed to do."



GRANT RECIPIENT

Circle of Life Program at Horses of Hope Oregon Enriches the Lives of Clients and Horses

By Nikki Ingersoll

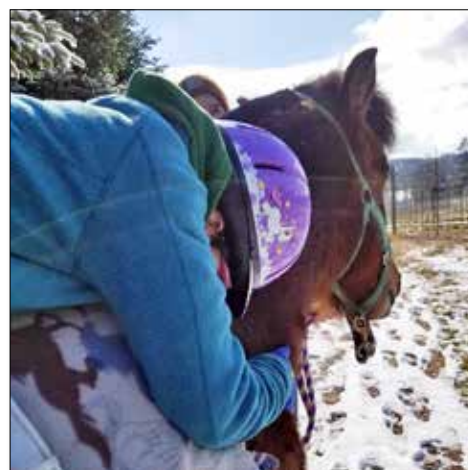
On behalf of our clients, horses, staff and board of directors, it is my honor to thank the Latham Foundation for entrusting us with a grant for animal-assisted activities that benefit both people and their animal partners. Your support makes a lasting difference, and we are deeply grateful.

We could not provide the services to our community that we do

without healthy and happy equine partners. As a nonprofit, it can be difficult to justify spending money on something that does not produce immediate effect. Because of the Latham Foundation's generosity, we've been able to provide important supplemental nutritional care to our herd, which has a less visible, but far-reaching impact on our herd. This subtle addition has had a significant impact on our organization as a whole. Our vision is to promote health, happiness and healing through horses, and it is foundational priority to such a vision that we extend those same priorities to the horses who are doing that work.

Our approximately 45 volunteers, who come from all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, have

benefited from the training made possible by this grant by gaining knowledge about equine care and safety, as well as development of essential character traits like empathy, patience and commitment through trainings and hands-on interactions. By learning about the feeding and supplement regimen used at Horses of Hope Oregon, volunteers developed a deeper understanding of the nutritional requirements of our herd. Additionally, the trainings on how to properly care for the





herd empowered volunteers to interact independently, safely and productively with the horses, which provides benefits to the horses, our volunteers and our organization. By learning about stall care, pasture management, hoof care and grooming techniques, volunteers are now able to be an extra set of eyes and hands to help staff ensure the best possible care is taken of our valuable herd.

With the nutraceuticals we were able to use because of this grant, we saw improved mobility and a reduction in pain for six of our senior horses. Specifically, our miniature horse, Gloria, who



previously had a hitch in her step due to joint problems, received a hyaluronic acid supplement and now trots and canters without that hitch, and without pain. Buster, our oldest horse, was able to participate in sessions without pain up until just a few weeks prior to his passing in July of 2020, at the age of 36. We believe this healthy and long life can be attributed to the high-quality diet and supplements he received. Skip, our 20-year-old gelding who was born into our program, has improved hoof health as a result of improving his supplement intake.

Our clients benefit from qualified volunteers and healthy, happy equine partners. We currently serve clients from two to 74 years of age with 104 different diagnoses. We monitored and measured the effectiveness of our equine care regimen through detailed feeding logs and individual horse care notes and by developing and maintaining a close relationship between our horse care staff and our herd. Our staff is attuned with each horse's needs and can readily identify changes in behavior or physicality that need attention.

We monitored the effectiveness of our volunteer trainings with

interviews, observations, and solicited, specific feedback. We looked for retention of skills and demonstrated understanding of the philosophy on equine/human engagement that drives our equine care program.

We thank you again for this grant that benefits not only our clients, horses, and staff, but our community as well. 🐾



Nikki Ingersoll
Executive Director
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Turner, OR 97392
executivedirector@hohoregon.org





GRANT RECIPIENT

Heart and Hooves Therapy Turns No One Away, Whatever Their Ability to Pay



By Melissa Sargent

With Latham's grant we were able to reach more children and adults in the disabled, special needs, and senior community. We visited all despite their ability to give a donation, and despite having COVID-19 shut us down from March 13th until June 17th, 2020.

This grant made it possible to continue to provide our program to any and all within the San Diego community.

Here are some examples:

Zoom story time was a fun and unique way to have our kiddos/adults see the farm, the animals and still learn. We worked on many skills like listening to the story, being focused, calm, and asking questions about the book and more.

ON-SITE INDIVIDUAL AND SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

Rebecca M: 20-year-old with spina bifida wheelchair bound

Cherise Q: 38-year-old with depression

Claire R: 3-year-old with rare genetic disorder

Emilo and Angelo: Twin brothers 10-year-old in foster care

Panvai R: 20-year-old with developmental disability

Layla L: 14-year-old with OCD

ON-SITE GROUP SESSIONS

Participants come to learn how to work on a farm, how to work with others, communicate, take directions, clean stalls, care for the horses safely, and take care of chickens and a goat. They get to enjoy a nice lunch too.

Madeleine Sophia Center: Four disabled adults with autism, cerebral palsy, and physical disability

Unyeway: Five disabled adults with mental and physical disabilities

Yellow Ribbon Fund Caregivers Walk: Military women who are caregivers for their spouses, relatives, or other military personnel

San Diego County Probation: Four youth currently serving time for committing a crime

OFF-SITE VISITS

Ocean Beach Library: Reading a book about being different and how it is OK. Kiddos get a safety presentation and then get to pet and brush a mini horse.





Escondido Post-Acute Care: Memory care and rehab facility

Villa Rancho Bernardo: Memory care and rehab facility

Interfaith Community Services: For children and adults, military families, and staff

Meridian Lake San Marcos: Memory care and assisted living

La Vida Rancho San Diego: Assisted living and rehab facility

Cardiff School Disability Awareness Week: Children visited with a mini horse to learn that it is OK to be different.

St. Madeleine Sophia Center: Campus Day Program for adults with mental and physical disabilities

Palomar College EMT/Paramedic School: Visited the students prior to their final exams

Mt. Shadows Campus: Living for adults with disabilities

Nosh Homes: Living for adults with down syndrome, autism, memory care, and more

Pacific Coast School: Where a student passed away during a field trip, we offered support to students, staff, and parents.

Hospice visits to help families and patients during this hard time

Mitchell Thorp Walk: Offering support to families with children that have life threatening cancers or other diseases

Therapeutic approach to growth (TAG): Small group of children with autism

Paradise Valley Hospital: Memory care and rehab

ZAZA birthday wish: ZAZA is a 3-year-old little girl with leukemia who loves unicorns. We visited with her and her family.

Heart and Hooves Therapy, Inc. is beyond grateful for Latham's support. We have been able to reach many people in many different



walks of life. Your donation helps us enhance the lives of children and adults of any age and ability with a different kind of therapy.

Our program grew and shared animal-assisted activities/therapies with many. Thank you again. We hope that we made you proud. 🐾

Melissa Sargent
President/Founder
619-633-5105



www.heartandhoovestherapy.org
facebook.com/heartandhoovestherapy



GRANT RECIPIENT

How I Learned to Breathe with Horses:

Learning and Working with the Native Horsemanship Youth Program

*By Justine Winnie,
Board Member*



LaVonne Tom and Joey the stallion

I lean over the wheel and coax my boyfriend's ragged old red truck up the steep gravel drive. She spits up some rocks but we're making it.

It's summer and it's hot. A Saturday. There's no air conditioning in the truck, and I've taken it on a ferry over Puget Sound to get here.

As I round the top of the drive, a little cabin comes into view.

I park under a tree and get out. I'm nervous.

The door of the cabin slides open and a woman emerges. She has long white hair and a smoky voice.

They're enormous, but Lynne explains that these horses are special teachers. They have been trained for years to stay calm even if a child is screaming or crying, even if their tails are pulled, even if you crawl under their bellies.

Eventually it's time to get on. There's no saddle.

In fact, there's no bridle, and no mounting block. Just a halter, a horse, and a step ladder.

"Zipper, my good Zipper," Lynne says to the horse. He stands patiently. I put a helmet on and we make sure it fits.

Lynne tells me to breathe—and yes, I'm scared. She says to slide on gently.

I climb the step ladder and settle onto Zipper's back. He is warm.



Lynne Ferguson and Joey

"Hello!" she yells.

I've come on a hunch.

I want to ride a horse. Without knowing what I'm looking for exactly, I've come to this ranch on the Port Madison Indian Reservation to meet a stranger.

"Hello," I call back.

The woman's name is Lynne. We spend an hour together. Several horses graze calmly around us. No fence in between.

Lynne's watching me keenly. "Breathe!" she says. "Relax your body."

I breathe and feel the fear loosen. I let the bottom half of my body melt into the horse's body. I breathe.

No saddle. Just my weight resting on his glossy back.

Falling off seems like a distinct possibility. But I don't fall off. And when Lynne cues the horse to begin to walk, I can feel every movement he makes.

Native Horsemanship

You can hear cars on the ranch, but the tall, dark evergreens make a wide wall around the rolling pastures. In between there is fresh air and an expanse of sky. We watch eagles and hawks fly over us while we work outside. There is a magic to the place itself.

Lynne sings and plays an exceptionally beautiful guitar she keeps in the cabin. She tells me stories about everything—horses, children, music, poets, Native identity, and culture.

Though my great-grandmother found it too painful to speak about her Alaskan ancestry, Lynne pegs me as Native by my profile. She waits until I bring it up. I come to realize she gives excellent advice, when asked.

As I make my journey to the ranch each Saturday, I learn to ride a horse gently, with light hands on the reins. I learn that Lynne played gigs with

a band for money to raise her own five children—and then she raised a few more.

What is now the Native Horsemanship Youth Program (NHYP) began simply: Lynne raised many children who had lived through profound trauma, and when these children spent time with the family's horses, sometimes they began to heal.

"I have a large family, and some of our young relatives lived with us over the years," Lynne explains.

"I noticed how children who were troubled became happier, more secure, and more confident after spending time with our horses. We used native Numunuh (also known as Comanche) methods of working with our horses, as my great-grandfather did. These traditional teachings focus on relationship-building and bonding with the horses on the ground. We rely on this bond, our breath, and our body language to communicate with our horse friends."

Kindness and connection are at the center of the Native Horsemanship Youth Program.

"We emphasize bonding with our horses and ensuring that they have as natural a life as possible,

surrounded by open pasture and beloved herdmates," Lynne says.

"This focus on kindness and bonding creates beautiful relationships between kids, human teachers, and horses."

Free to All

At NHYP, lessons are free if you cannot pay. Everyone is welcome. There is no shame in being scared, or poor, or a bit different.

The ranch is always full of little cousins and the children of children Lynne taught to ride.

The children learn to breathe with some of the same horses their parents rode. These gray-muzzled teachers move slowly and carefully with little ones on their backs.

She has older students like me, too. There is a custom wheelchair-accessible mounting block, and her horses stand utterly still as students



Noah Feely



Corinne Gerke-Middleton

on me and some days all I do is brush them until they shine. They drift off to sleep standing up while I do this.

I come home from the ranch glowing and singing. My boyfriend says I can borrow his truck any time I want.

The kids who come for horse class figure out quickly that shouting and loud play means the horses may decide to move to another part of the pasture. We all get to choose what is right for us.

students come and ride. Some students are nonverbal. Some begin to speak.

Foster children, children from poor families, gender diverse and queer youth, all find kindness and connection at the ranch. We show up as we are.

Horses, Friends, Teachers

Then there are the horses. Free of stalls, they live in herds, bonded together for decades. I read once that if you kept a cat in a little cage its whole life you might think cats were boring and stupid animals.

A horse without a stall, it turns out, is quite another beast.

Lynne shows me how to watch the herd. I learn how horses say hello to each other, and how they say “yes” and “no” to each other. I spend quiet moments in the pastures standing still next to them as they graze or just relax. They rub their giant faces

There is no arena filled with sand at the ranch for students to ride around and around. Instead, there are grassy hills, trees, and acres of open pasture to wander through.

In the summer, school buses filled with children make the improbable trip up the gravel road and cheerful chaos ensues as we help them take turns riding the horses, leading the horses, brushing and loving the horses. I join a loyal group of volunteers who walk beside each child as they ride to make sure they are safe.

After they ride, the children gather in a circle around Lynne under a clump of trees. She gives them indigenous horsemanship teachings that her grandparents gave her.

“In Native horsemanship, we build relationships with our horses. Our ancestors had to be able to ride hands-free,” she explains. “So we communicate with our horses with our bodies and our breath.”

All That You Change Changes You

In this space of mutual respect, fascinating things unfold. Sometimes children form incredible bonds with “difficult” horses and are able to ride them far better than adults can. Some young program participants grow up to have careers in equine fields. Like the children who inspired the program’s beginnings, sometimes kids find themselves ready to heal from painful experiences.

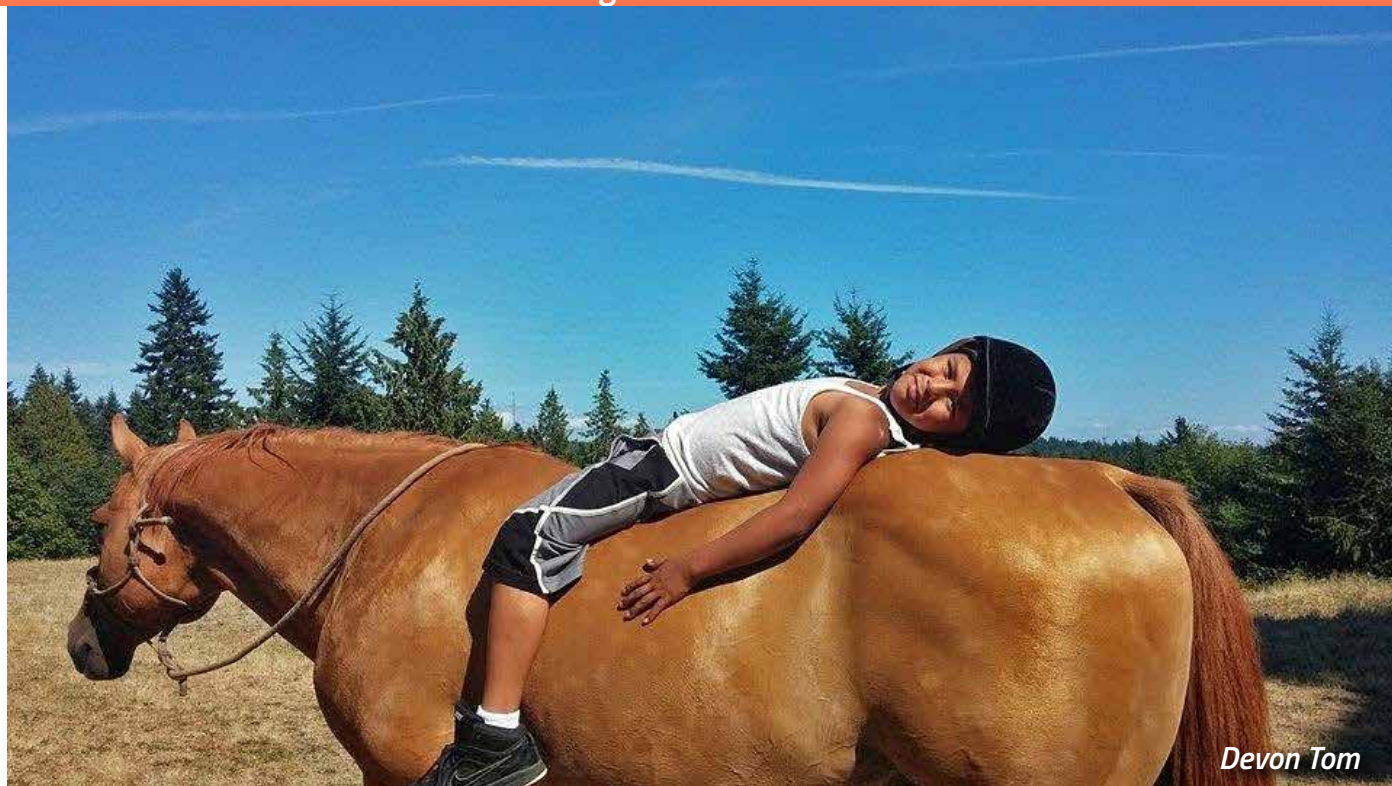
Lynne celebrates the specific genius and talent of each student.

Octavia Butler wrote:
“All that you touch you change.
All that you change changes you.
The only lasting truth is change.
God is change.”

When we visit the ranch, we spend time just being together, horses, children, elders, and the land itself.



Chocolate Batman the mini horse



No one comes here to save anyone. As we learn, work, and rest together, we are all changed.

A Difficult Year

Of course, this year has been different.

The pandemic has brought new challenges, but thanks to the incredible community around the program, we continue to offer limited classes to children, families, and community members.

It's harder for some folks to get to horse class safely. For now, only children who live together can take lessons together. Many social and tribal programs simply aren't safe with COVID-19. Summer horse camps will have to wait another year, and we have gotten used to sanitizing, wearing masks, and keeping each other safe in this new way.

Funding has been difficult, too.

Before the pandemic, Lynne held a benefit concert for the program each year, a main source of donations to feed and care for the horses, especially as so many of them are getting older and need special feed, supplements, and veterinary care. They are precious to us and they get the best care.

Several of our community low-cost horse boarders have found themselves unable to pay for their horses' care after losing work to the pandemic. Lynne has found ways to continue to care for these horses regardless, but it's an added expense.

When we got the news that we had received the Latham Foundation Grant, we were stunned and overjoyed. The support means more than we can say, and we are grateful

to be part of this community that values kindness, relationship, and connection so deeply.

In 2021, we hope to host NHYP's first ever virtual music concert and fundraiser. We are hard at work evolving and growing our work so it can continue for future generations. Fortunately, as a free, entirely grant and donation-based program, we are used to getting creative. Our volunteers, donors, and participants continue to inspire and sustain us.

"As we approach our 24th year of serving our area youth (Port Madison Reservation/Suquamish, Washington, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, and surrounding communities) we are thankful for the opportunity to continue, and especially offer our gratitude to the Latham Foundation for their support," says Lynne.

Trust a Horse

I remember Lynne saying once during a lesson, as a child slid gently onto the bare back of her regal and astonishingly gentle red dun stallion, “Sit there, in the space the Creator made for us to sit.”

Joey, the incredible stallion, taught generations of children to ride with compassion, self-awareness, gentleness, and traditional Native skills before finally passing away last year. His son, a giant buckskin gelding, is turning out to be quite the riding horse.

I find myself thinking of this work in the context of a long, long stretch of time, from the first Indigenous people and horses to a future we can’t predict or control.



Stan, Devon, & LaVonne Tom

We never know what teachers, what wisdom, freedom, laughter, or courage are around life’s next bend, or what songs might emerge when we begin to sing in the presence of a wise and kind elder.

What happens when you trust a horse to carry your weight?



Kiara, LaVonne, Stan, Devon, and Stan Tom

Support Our Work

Would you like to connect with the Native Horsemanship Youth Program or make a contribution to our work? Keep an eye out for Lynne’s upcoming fundraiser album, a thirty-year retrospective on her career as a musician.

Check out Lynne’s music on YouTube:
[youtube.com/watch?v=L7-rNsF4UIQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L7-rNsF4UIQ)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2c08HkHG0M&t=14s>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ij_AtCk1fD4

Learn more about the program and make a donation on our [website](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

Author bios:

Lynne Ferguson began this program in 1998 to meet the need in her own community for a space for kids to heal and build confidence and joy in their lives. She learned traditional

horsemanship from her great-grandparents and observed that these teachings helped children recover from difficult experiences. A talented guitarist and singer, she raised her large family and supports the program today with her music.

Justine Winnie has been volunteering at the Native Horsemanship Youth Program for four years. She lives on a farm near Mt. Rainier with a flock of sheep, her partner, and their beloved dogs. She loves animals and young people and is grateful for the opportunity to learn and share traditional teachings.



Justine Winnie and her friend Zipper

THE HEALING POWER OF HORSES

BY NICOLA BRIDGES IN *PARADE MAGAZINE*



We hope many of you had a chance to see *Parade Magazine* on February 17th which featured “*The Healing Power of Horses*” by Nicola Bridges, along with several other heartwarming success stories. She profiled Jaycee Lee Dugard who was abducted in 1991 and confined for 18 years before she and the two daughters she had in captivity were recovered from their kidnappers.



How do you start to heal after a trauma like that? One of the things that helped the most, Dugard said, was horses. She and her children and mother did equine-facilitated therapy (EFT) with Rebecca Bailey, a clinical

and forensic psychologist who specializes in complex trauma.

We are proud to remind readers that this is not the first time Jaycee’s and Dr. Bailey’s names appeared in the *Latham Letter Winter 2016*. In 2012 we printed a review of Jaycee’s book, *A Stolen Life*, and in 2016, Dr. Deirdre Rand wrote an article for us about Dr. Bailey’s work.

According to Bridges, “EFT is a fast-growing therapeutic mental health treatment being used across the nation for everything from trauma and addiction recovery to therapeutic riding for special needs, including autism.

“Veterans, inmates, and first responders are all finding benefits in getting off the couch and into stables. Although equine therapy itself has only recently been deeply studied, research shows that horses are acutely tuned in to human emotions, and anecdotal accounts of their therapeutic impact abound.” 🐾

“In Rebecca’s experience, horses will only trust and cooperate with a client when the client maintains his or her emotions in an authentic way that represents safety to the horse. This immediate feedback from the horse, along with the reward of gaining the horse’s trust, is unique to EAP.”

Definition of EAP

Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) – an experiential mode of psychotherapy that involves activities with horses which are primarily non-mounted; treatment is delivered by a licensed mental health professional who may work as a team with an equine professional; equine exercises are designed to achieve clearly defined treatment goals; non-mounted exercises may involve grooming, haltering, getting the horse to move without touching it; mounted exercises may involve sitting or lying on the horse's back while the horse is held or led by someone else.

Hippotherapy – a form of assisted riding in which the movement of the horse is used to treat patients with neuromuscular, cognitive and sensory processing disorders; requires face-to-face involvement of a licensed occupational, physical, or speech therapist with specialized training in this type of equine therapy; the patient is placed in various positions on the horse's back with a volunteer on each side; movement of the horse facilitates improved balance, coordination, muscle tone, cognitive and sensory integration skills.

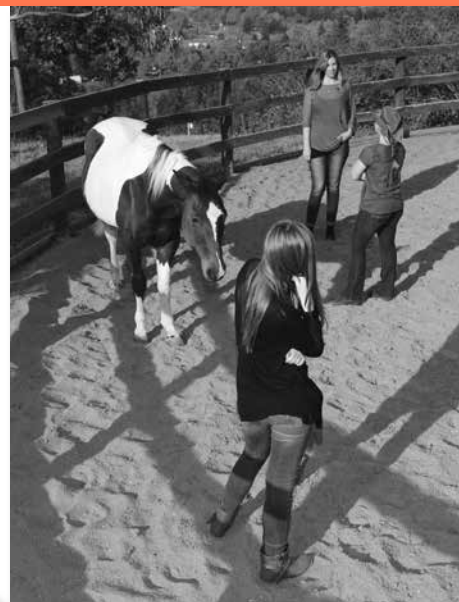
Therapeutic Horseback Riding – a form of assisted riding designed to improve physical, psychological, and social functioning for people with special needs who are able to sit upright on a horse and follow step-by-step instructions; students participate in mounted and non-mounted activities under the guidance of an instructor who understands how to adapt lessons or various disabilities; students may be assisted by a horse handler and sidewalkers under the instructor's direction.

Key Elements of Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy

- Experiential interactive activities with horses (primarily groundwork)
- Conducted by a licensed mental health professional who may work as a team with an equine professional
- The arena helps create a “holding environment” for EAP.




- Individuals and families who are resistant to traditional talk therapy may be more open to experiential modalities involving animals.
- Therapeutic exercises that capitalize on unique characteristics of horses as therapy animals
- Interacting with the horse provides clients with a unique form of feedback.
- Therapist and client process observations and interactions involving the horse(s) together in a way that encourages self-reflection and spontaneous insights.



- Allows for a non threatening metaphorical presentation of emotional and psychological material
- Facilitates slowing down and being in the present, which are important for communication, listening, and learning
- Generates the neurohormone oxytocin which facilitates socialization and bonding
- Horses tend to lighten things up a little, bringing defenses down, and making people laugh.



One of our films in the “HelpMeHelpYou” series also focuses on horses’ ability to connect and heal. You’ll find *Horses Heal Too: Two Different Paths to Healing* at <https://vimeo.com/287165157>. 

Study: Horseback Riding Helps Kids with Autism, ADHD

First-of-its kind research shows how brain-building exercises and therapeutic horseback riding improve the motor skills of young people with neurodevelopmental disorders.

Posted by Edited Press Release | Jan 31, 2020 | *Horse Industry News, Welfare and Industry*

A study reported in *Frontiers in Veterinary Science* that therapeutic horseback riding combined with brain-building exercises can improve the dexterity, coordination, and strength of children with neurodevelopmental disorders.

Neurodevelopmental disorders, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD), affect as many as one in six American children. Physical activity is known to benefit these patients in a variety of ways, but this is the first study showing the short and long-term effects of a program combining horseback riding and cognitive training.

“We wanted to investigate how a combination of equine-assisted activities and various brain-building tasks, administered by a speech therapist, would affect motor skills in children with disorders including autism spectrum disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity,” says Brandon Rigby, PhD, MS, of the Texas Woman’s University, in Denton.

“Our findings should be helpful to therapists and other health care professionals who are tasked with implementing strategies and interventions to improve motor skill proficiency in children and youth with ADHD and ASD, which were the most common diagnoses in our study.”

For their study, Rigby and his collaborators recruited 25 children with neurodevelopmental disorders between the ages of 5 and 16. Each child completed one of several programs ranging in length from eight weeks to one year. The programs included weekly introductory horseback riding, as well as sessions with a speech therapist two to three times per week.

During the horseback riding, the children learned about horse anatomy, riding equipment, and the basics of riding. The brain-building activities focused on exercises that train the brain to process sensory information such as sound, sight, balance, and spatial orientation. These sessions included music therapy, eye tracking exercises, and hand-eye coordination tasks. The children and their parents were also given daily exercises they could perform at home.

After eight weeks of the program, the children showed improved motor skills, although there was sometimes a delay before the changes became apparent. For the participants who continued the program for one year, these benefits continued for the duration of the

study. These participants also showed improvements in their behavior and academic performance, including social and communication skills. Additionally, anecdotal responses from parents and caregivers suggested that the children were more positive, focused, and calm both in and outside of the program.

Given the small study size, larger-scale research is still needed to better understand the potential benefits to the range of neurodevelopmental disorders. Some limitations include the participants’ varying diagnoses (as opposed to looking at benefits per ADHD or autism specifically) and the allowance to continue prescribed medications or therapies outside the scope of the program. Despite this, the program’s results are promising, and the researchers hope this will inspire further interest in cross-disciplinary programs.

“These findings may allow for a greater demand for these programs, ultimately making them more accessible and affordable,” says Rigby. 🐾



How much do you know about Horses?

How many states in the US have horses named as their state animal?

4 13 7 10

Ans: 13

There are quite a few states that have horses as their state animals — most of them being horse breeds that were developed within that state or have a deep-rooted history there. Those include the Racking Horse for Alabama; Florida Cracker Horse for Florida; Appaloosa for Idaho; Thoroughbred for Kentucky and Maryland; Morgan for Massachusetts and Vermont; Missouri Fox Trotter for Missouri; Nokota for North Dakota; Marsh Tacky for South Carolina; Tennessee Walker for Tennessee; and the American Quarter Horse for Texas. New Jersey is unique in that it simply chose “the horse” as is its state animal, naming no specific breed.

How many draft horse breeds that were developed in the US still exist today?

3 6 4 1

Ans: 1

The American Cream Draft is the only draft breed that was developed in the US that still exists today. The breed was developed in the 1900s and is considered critically endangered. The American Cream Draft is known for its cream-colored coat and pink skin. They

are a light draft, ranging in height from 15 hands to 16.3 hands.

What is the only true Wild Horse?

Mustang

Przewalski

Gypsy Vanner

Apaloosa

Ans: Przewalski

The only truly wild horse left in the world is the critically endangered Przewalski horse. Throughout North America, there are herds of “wild” horses. At least, that is what we call them, as it sounds more romantic than herds of feral horses, but technically, they are just that. Located in Mongolia, Przewalskis were reintroduced via zoo breeding programs in the 1990s.



In captivity, there are 2,000 of them left. This is not enough for genetic diversity, so they are now creating clones using deceased Przewalski horse DNA to bring in new genetics to try and save the breed.



How old was the oldest horse on record?

62

41

45

37

Ans. 62

According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, the oldest horse that has reliable proof, was Old Billy, who lived to be 62 years old. He was foaled in 1760 in the U.K. and passed away in 1822. That's more than double what the average horse lives, with most living between 25 and 30 years. Old Billy was a well-known barge horse of his time, with many photos of him appearing in newspapers. His skull is on display at the Manchester Museum.



Can horses understand human facial expressions?

Yes

No

Ans. Yes

Studies have found that horses not only understand human facial expressions, but they also react differently to them. When shown a picture of an angry face, horses turn their head so their left eye is fixed on it, which makes sense as the right brain is the side that processes negative emotions. However, when shown a smiley face, they look at it with either eye. Moreover, horses reacted with increased heart rate at the angry faces. The study also found that horses remember emotional states from the last time a human was with them. 🐾



Conferences



Join us for APHE’s first-ever all virtual conference, featuring speakers from around the world! This year’s conference will provide participants with professional networking opportunities and presentations that will help you renew, restore, and reset in 2021. This is the national conference for humane educators!

Schedule

Six virtual sessions will occur in short increments over a two week period (April 19th-April 30th) in order to limit interruptions to your daily schedule. If you are unable to watch one of the sessions live, do not worry, as participants will be provided with all recordings and materials at the conclusion of the conference.

For exact dates, times, and presentation descriptions, please visit the Schedule page.

Here is the conference link, please check it out.
<https://www.aphe.org/page-1855797>



From Amelia Curtis, Education Manager, San Diego Humane Society, edu@sdhumane.org

It has been almost a year since our meetup at San Diego Humane and the world has changed quite a bit!

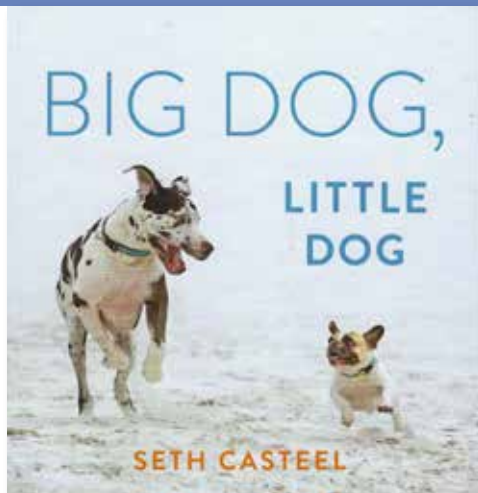
We would like to invite you to attend a virtual meetup with local humane educators on Wednesday, May 19th from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

We will be sharing creative ways to engage children and adults virtually, at home and off-site!

This meetup will take place over Zoom. Formal invite to follow.



SEE Y'ALL THERE VIRTUALLY!



Big Dog, Little Dog

By Seth Casteel

A passionate animal activist, Seth Casteel got his start in photography by volunteering to take pictures of shelter animals, hoping to inspire potential pet parents to take them home.

We often focus on dogs as a (hu) man's best friend, but dogs also have friendships of their own, and this is what Casteel wanted to highlight in his new series **Big Dog, Little Dog**: the incredible way these animals interact with one another. Dogs have tremendous physical diversity. They can range in weight from one pound to more than 350; there are more than 400 recognized breeds and an endless number of combinations. How and why they choose one another remains a beautiful mystery.

For his previous bestselling books, *Underwater Dogs* and *Underwater Puppies*, Casteel needed to establish a relationship with each dog. The approach for **Big Dog, Little Dog** has been the opposite. Rather than allowing his presence to enter the frame, Casteel waited as an observer

for the moment he witnessed a special moment between friends.

Guaranteed to make you and the dog lovers in your life smile, **Big Dog, Little Dog** is a celebration of friendship and our furry friends, featuring surprising and adorable duos.

Seth Casteel is an award-winning photographer and the author of national bestsellers that include Underwater Dogs and Underwater Puppies. His photographs of babies and animals have been featured in varied media, including The New York Times, National Geographic, Morning Edition, The Washington Post, Today, and Business Insider, as well as on the front page of the outlets AOL, MSN, Yahoo, and hundreds of others. He lives in California.

Big Dog, Little Dog
Seth Casteel
Plume
ISBN 9780593183663

The Compton Cowboys:

The New Generation of Cowboys in America's Urban Heartland

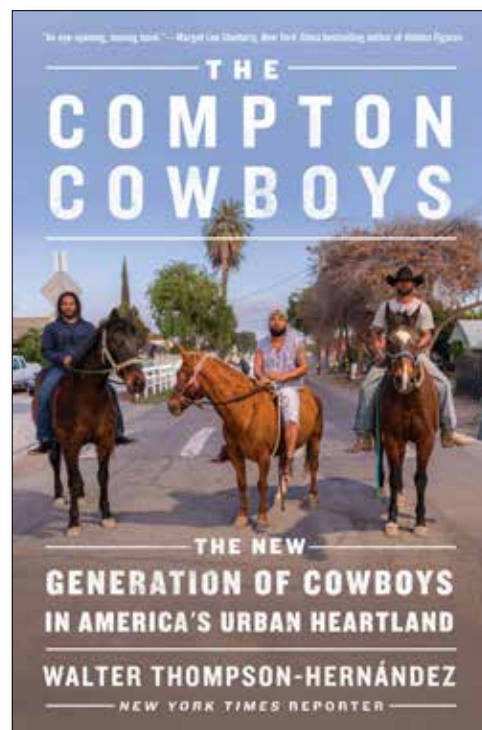
By Walter Thompson-Hernandez

"The streets raised us; the horses saved us."

A *New York Times* reporter tells the compelling story of The Compton Cowboys, a group of African-American men and women who defy stereotypes and continue the proud, centuries-old

tradition of black cowboys in the heart of one of America's most notorious cities—Los Angeles.

In Compton, California, ten black riders on horseback cut an unusual profile, their cowboy hats tilted against the hot Los Angeles sun. They are the Compton Cowboys, their small ranch one of the very last in a formerly semirural area of the city that has been home to African-American horse riders for decades. To most people, Compton is known only as the home of rap greats NWA and Kendrick Lamar, hyped in the media for its seemingly intractable gang violence. But in 1988 Mayisha Akbar founded The Compton Jr. Posse to provide local youth with a safe alternative to the streets, one that connected them with the rich legacy of black cowboys in American culture. From Mayisha's youth organization came the Cowboys of today:



black men and women from Compton for whom the ranch and the horses provide camaraderie, respite from violence, healing from trauma, and recovery from incarceration.

The Cowboys include Randy, Mayisha's nephew, faced with the daunting task of remaking the Cowboys for a new generation; Anthony, former drug dealer and inmate, now a family man and mentor; Keiara, a single mother pursuing her dream of winning a national rodeo championship; and a tight clan of twentysomethings (Kenneth, Keenan, Charles, and Tre) for whom horses bring the freedom, protection, and status that often elude the young black men of Compton.

The Compton Cowboys is a story about trauma and transformation, race and identity, compassion, and ultimately, belonging. Walter Thompson-Hernández paints a unique and unexpected portrait of this city, pushing back against stereotypes to reveal an urban community in all its complexity, tragedy, and triumph.

"Thompson-Hernández's portrayal of Compton's black cowboys broadens our perception of Compton's young black residents, and connects the Compton Cowboys to the historical legacy of African Americans in the west. An eye-opening, moving book."—Margot Lee Shetterly, *New York Times* best-selling author of *Hidden Figures*

"Walter Thompson-Hernández has written a book for the ages: a profound and moving account of what it means to be black in America that is awe inspiring in its truth-telling and limitless in its empathy. Here is an American epic of black survival and creativity, of terrible misfortune and everyday resilience, of grace, redemption and, yes, cowboys."—Junot Díaz, Pulitzer prize-winning author of *This is How You Lose Her*

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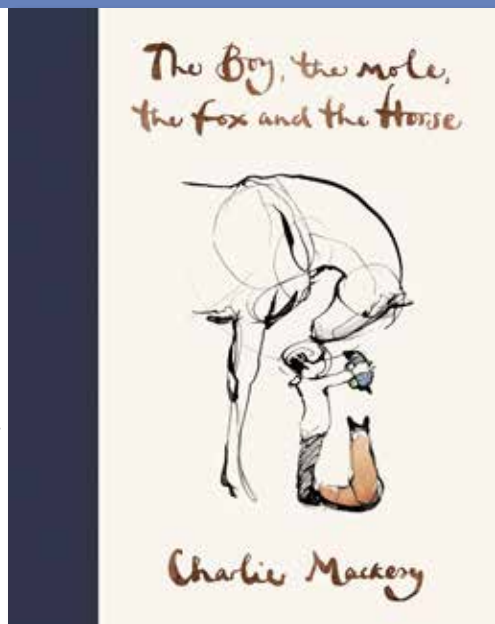
The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse

By Charlie Mackesy

"What do you want to be when you grow up?" asked the mole.

"Kind," said the boy.

Author and illustrator Charlie Mackesy offers inspiration and hope in uncertain times in this



beautiful book, following the tale of a curious boy, a greedy mole, a wary fox, and a wise horse who find themselves together in sometimes difficult terrain, sharing their greatest fears and biggest discoveries about vulnerability, kindness, hope, friendship, and love. The shared adventures and important conversations between the four friends are full of life lessons that have connected with audiences of all ages.



The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse is not only a thought-provoking, discussion-worthy story, the book itself is an object of art."—*New York Times*.

"Love, friendship, and kindness – this book speaks a universal language."—Bear Grylls

Harper One

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What do you imagine this gorilla is thinking about?



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