

The Equinox Round-Up

HORSES CHANGING LIVES



WELCOME FROM THE TRUSTEES

A warm hello to our community, to our supporters and donors, to our followers and believers and to our human and animal friends and family. We have all experienced a very different year and we hope that this newsletter finds you all safe, feeling like you have survived, and you can look forward to starting afresh with new scope and energy. We hope you enjoy catching up on our news for 2020, despite having a different year, we have some exciting things to share with you!



NEWS FROM 2020

EAGALA CONFERENCE

We were privileged to once again present at the Eagala Annual Conference, this time in Lexington, Kentucky. It was an incredible opportunity and we thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to network with others who work in this field around the world. Our presentation focused on how we have shifted as facilitators and have learnt so much from our equine partners, allowing us to deepen our clients' experience with us.

ZOOM TELECONFERENCING

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our programme with Sisters

Incorporated was cut short. We made the decision to continue with our final sessions on Zoom, and these proved to be very powerful sessions using images of horses, grounding meditations and exploring new ways to connect with our clients.

BUSINESS AWARD AND NOMINATION

MEA Business Awards 2020, proudly hosted by **MEA Markets**.

The Equinox Trust has been awarded **Best Equine Assisted Therapy Provider - Western Cape**

The selection process: Following your nomination acceptance, you were added to

our shortlist and became subject to MEA Markets' rigorous internal vetting procedure. Our extensive research and judging process is driven by merit and centred around an in-depth evaluation of skills and services on offer. Awardees must demonstrate expertise within their field, dedication to customer service and a commitment to promoting excellence. This approach has brought us much success and commendation throughout its use and enforces MEA Markets' stance that victors are not determined by popularity of votes, but by their contributions to their industry.

SPIRIT

It has been a long thought of dream of the **Equinox Trust** to one day rescue a pony. To give this pony a chance to experience life in a safe haven and to learn to trust the environment and its people again. As lockdown pushed many such thoughts away, it somehow ignited this dream. Getting in touch with the **Cart Horse Association Cape Town** and spending some time with their 50 rescue ponies and horses, one little soul decided we were



the chosen ones. With all our intention to choose a pony, a shy little mare zoned in on us, not leaving us out of her sight as we drifted around the yard visiting with the rest of the herd. The connection was made and a unanimous decision too, that we had found our pony, or let's rather say, we had been found by **Spirit**.

Once in her new home at the Equinox Trust home base, she very quickly wormed her way

past the intended separation period of introductions to the resident herd. She weaved herself into the flow of the yard and deeply into our hearts. Within a short period of time her coat started losing its dullness and her spirit began to shine. With bright eyes she began to welcome our therapy groups and is now more than happy to cuddle and kiss and be the one to be loved by all.

FUNDRAISING AND STATS 2020

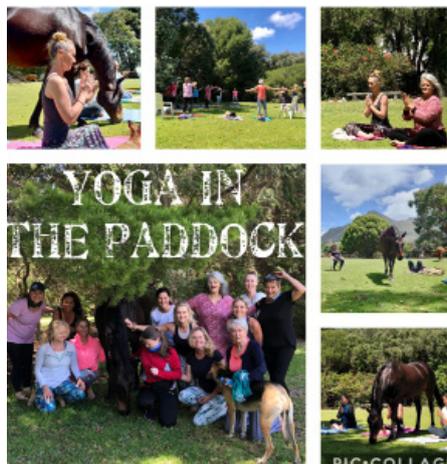
HORSE EXPO 2020

We had a successful fundraising event in February of this year which was our inaugural Horse Expo. We saw over 500 people arrive through the gates, wonderful horse performances ranging from Western Riding and Equitation displays to mare and foal and stallion advertising as well as a fun musical display by four horses. There was wonderful food and exciting horse related goods to browse and purchase.

YOGA IN THE PADDOCK

Covid has severely limited our ability to continue with our

Yoga mornings, however we managed to hold one in November, which was a big success in terms of being fully booked. Thank you all for the support and to our Yoga teacher of the day, Caz Joseph.



DONATIONS

Two of our single biggest donations to date!

National Lotteries Commission

National Development Agency

2020 STATS

99% Women, reflecting a shift in focus to women's programmes.

We only saw a slight decrease in total clients, even through the Covid lockdown.

NEW ORGANISATIONS & TESTIMONIALS

2020

BRAVE ROCK GIRLS

BRAVE inspires and empowers girl leaders, supporting girl-led initiatives and building a network of women and girl leaders across the African continent. BRAVE uses the challenge of travel and adventure in wild places to create opportunities for girls, and works with those who can provide the resources, knowledge, experience, and safety that girls need to lead. We ran our first programme with a group of girls from BRAVE and it was a wonderful experience for all. We are so thankful to have had this programme funded by The National Lotteries Commission.



"THIS ADVENTURE HAS BEEN AMAZING BECAUSE I WAS REALLY ABLE TO EXPRESS MYSELF MORE SINCE BEING WITH THE HORSES AND COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITH BETTER PEOPLE. SARAH AND FIONA ARE REALLY SUPPORTIVE AND SO ARE THE REST OF THE GIRLS. WHENEVER I CAME HERE IT MADE ME CALM AND PEACEFUL. I NEVER KNEW THAT HORSES COULD DO SO MUCH FOR SOMEONE WITHOUT EVEN TALKING. I REALLY ENJOYED MYSELF, THIS IS AN EXPERIENCE TO REMEMBER."



HOPE HOUSE

We recently completed a carer's programme with some of the staff from Hope House, Table View. Hope House offers hope and care to hurting people. They offer counselling, addictions support and training to the people of Cape Town. Hope House is an organisation that is passionate about welcoming people of all races, religions and cultures to seek care and counselling with centres located in Bergvliet, Tableview and Kuilsrivier.

HORIZON HOUSE

Horizon House is a residential and sheltered-employment centre specialising in the holistic care of people with a primary intellectual disability. They approached us to work with their staff and aid in a training programme that they had set out for the year. It has been a wonderful experience to work with such a dynamic team and we look forward to working some more with them.

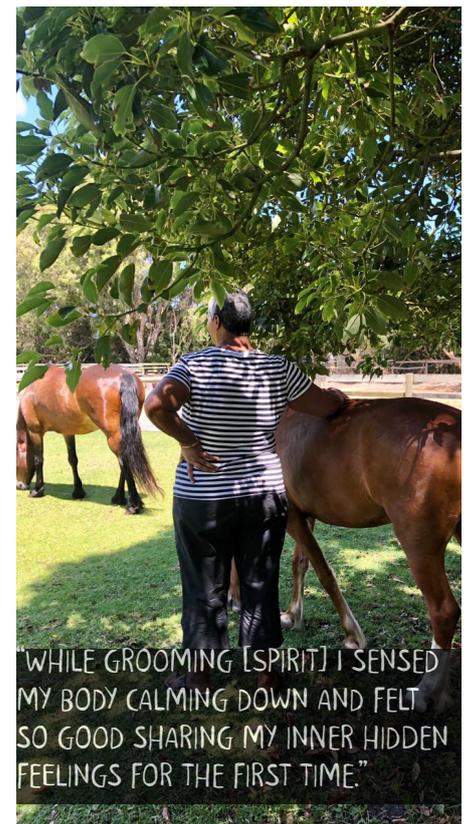
"THANKS SO MUCH SO FAR FOR YOUR PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE OF ALL OUR GROUPS. THEY ALL ENJOYED IT AND WERE AFTERWARDS ABLE TO REFLECT ON THEIR OWN LEARNING EXPERIENCE. WE APPRECIATE YOUR ASSISTANCE IN HELPING US CHANGING DIRECTION!"

DEWS OF QUIETNESS

"MY JOURNEY WITH THE HORSES TRANSFORMED MY PAIN INTO PURPOSE AND RE-IGNITED THE SPIRITUAL FIRE IN ME."

"THIS EXPERIENCE HAS ALLOWED ME TO CENTRE MY THOUGHTS AND ENERGY ON THINGS THAT MATTER TO ME MOST TO MAKE MYSELF THE PRIORITY AND TO CHOOSE ME EVERY TIME."

"I AM GRATEFUL AND THANKFUL FOR BEING AFFORDED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO GET HELP AND SUPPORT TO HELP ME REACH MY FULL POTENTIAL AND REACH MY DESTINY."



"WHILE GROOMING [SPIRIT] I SENSED MY BODY CALMING DOWN AND FELT SO GOOD SHARING MY INNER HIDDEN FEELINGS FOR THE FIRST TIME."

SISTERS INCORPORATED

"I remember the first time I walked out onto the green field, my trembling hands in pockets as empty as my heart which I was dragging along heavily and reluctantly at that stage. I had no idea what to expect, and I was hesitant. I had been around horses before and there had been nothing special about them. I certainly didn't see the connection between my shattered self and a horse. So, I dared to take my shoes off simply because I couldn't think of anything else to do and I didn't want anyone to notice my discomfort. We just stood there watching the horses for a time which allowed me to relax a bit. In hindsight, I was more than just broken at that stage. I had lost all of me and along with it, all my desire to live. I looked for an escape from life everywhere I went. Desperately wanting to escape myself and life as a whole. I could not see myself living another day, each day. Which was torture because I have two wonderful little girls. So ending my life was not an option, so in a tormenting limbo of choosing between life and death is where I hung for months... and is where I was when I arrived at the Equinox farm that day.

During one of our visits there I had a special 'moment' where I made a truly remarkable connection with one of the horses. She chose me and walked straight to me. She stopped eating and we shared in a timeless moment of just being in the same space at the same time. That day I had no idea what significant change that moment would bring me. By being, one being with another

without expectation, without judgement and without words, we just connected and everything around us melted away... lost its value and ceased to have any weight. Its difficult to explain it really. But the change that followed was profound.



I now understand the true meaning of just 'being'. It is something no amount of mindfulness teaching could help me understand. Being is, just being whatever you are in each moment of each day without judgment or attachment. Good or bad, happy or sad... or even craving death. The experience of allowing the horse into my space opened me up enough to trust her as a being, enough to allow her close. Which allowed me to open to others around me, and trust that I will be ok when others are near me. And even if I was not ok, it was ok to be not ok hahaha. But by allowing others closer to me, I was able to see them better and have found that I have started bonding with people again. By allowing the horse into my space I noticed what I was projecting. What I was car-

rying around with me. Some days I would feel like I was begging the horse to come near, even calling her and I would be rejected. But the moment I let my 'need' for wanting the horse near me, go. She would approach. I learnt an awareness of my emotions and desires, and the awareness in turn taught me to not attach larger emotions to the feelings and thoughts in a time where I had no measure of what normal or acceptable emotions were anymore. In doing this I was able to reach up and pull myself out of the dark pit of wanting to end my life... realizing that my thoughts and emotions are part of my being human and were healthy in the recovery process. But more importantly, I didn't have to feel depressed every time I felt sad. Or so overwhelmed by anger that I would think myself a horrid person and should die. That it is just anger and part of healing.

Something I really struggled with when I came out of abuse was that I didn't know how to be a person anymore. I didn't know who I was or how I was supposed to carry on living. At Equinox and with the horses, I have learnt to just BE a person, regardless of what my person may look like; broken; empty or sad. A lesson I may never have learnt. A skill I may never have acquired. A blessing I may never have received should the horse not have stood still in a timeless moment with me that day. "The only way out is through..." is the most powerful experience to be able to carry all your pain and the full weight of your trauma without judgement, THROUGH to a place where you can BE again."

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2021

HORSE EXPO 2021

We are very excited to be hosting our second annual fundraising event which will take place in February 2021, and if the one this year is anything to go by, we have an incredible event in store for everybody! The event is focused on the horse community of the Western Cape where all people involved in the horsey world can share what it is they do and show off and market their business, service, talent, club, stud etc.! We have some exciting performances already lined up and some interesting horse-related businesses and services on show.

NEW VENUES

We have been expanding our reach and have been privileged to work at 2 amazing new venues this year – Equivalence in Durbanville and Bodega Farm in Joostenbergvlakte. We would like to extend a big thank you to Anneke and Eliza for sharing your space and horses with us!

HORSE EXPO
21 FEBRUARY 2021

FEATURING
MONTE CAVALO LUSITANO STUD
WESTERN CAPE REINING CLUB
VON GAKHU STUD

STANDS
PS BRIDLES
HOLLARD EQUIPAGE
CART HORSE ASSOCIATION
CREATIVE HORSEWEAR
ANKIA JOUBERT ART
RUGARE ARTS

SPONSORS
KUDA INSURANCE
ARCO 360

VENUE
EUROPA
EQUESTRIAN

COVID REGULATIONS APPLY

Mail us for details : sarah@equinoxtrust.org
or contact us via social media

IN AID OF HORSES CHANGING LIVES OF WOMEN TRAUMA SURVIVORS
AND CARERS THROUGH THE EQUINOX THERAPY PROGRAMMES

www.equinoxtrust.org

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

We are so grateful for all the support we get from everyone we come across. We are only able to create change by having all of you involved and we would like to say a heartfelt thank you! It is a joint effort and together we are enriching communities and making a better South Africa.

To our horses, without whom this would not be what it is, we are so grateful of your existence, your compassion and your never-ending abilities to heal...

"FOR IT WAS NOT INTO MY EAR YOU WHISPERED, BUT INTO MY HEART. IT WAS NOT MY LIPS YOU KISSED, BUT MY SOUL"
Judy Garland

To our donors, funders and sponsors...it is YOU and YOUR contribution that has made so many changes possible for so many people. We admire your willingness and strength to recognise where help is needed and to be able to provide the way you do, thank you!

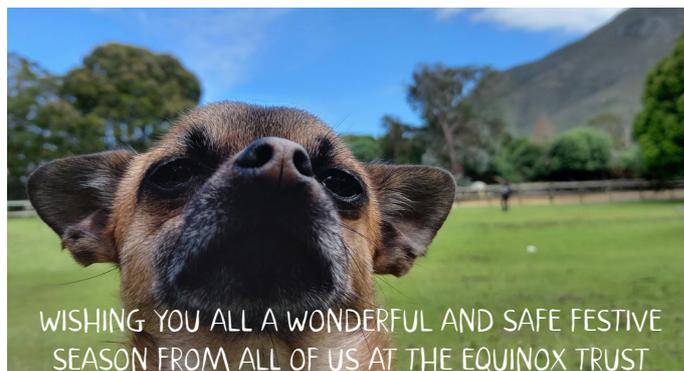
To our wonderful venues, thank you for your belief in what we do, for offering up your space and horses and for accommodating us. We are grateful and appreciative and hope you know how valued you are in the process of making

change happen for so many.

To our transport companies that help to get our beneficiaries to and from the venues safely, we thank you for your support and availability to accommodate our needs.

To our families, friends, and supporters we are truly thankful to have you believe in us and encourage us the way you do, thank you!

Thank you to everyone for giving support to endeavours such as ours, bringing smiles and healing to those in need is truly a heart-warming way to make change in our society.



Closed on 15th December and open from 6th January 2021