

Old Friends

Thoroughbred Retirement in Georgetown, Kentucky



Accredited by Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance (TAA)

Fall 2017

A Message from Michael Blowen

The most difficult thing about my work at Old Friends is being forced to say no to people who want to do what's best for their horse. Whether it's a family forced by circumstances to find a new home for their retired Thoroughbred or an owner or trainer who wants to give their old gelding or mare a soft spot to land. It's hard to say no to a breeding farm wanting to retire one of their stars with a lifetime procurement. We just want to do what's best for as many horses as we can.

The best part of my job is when we can say yes, which we've done recently thanks to your generosity. New arrivals include Johannesburg Smile, Palmer's Approach and Smooth Air. Brian Burns of Mt. Joy Stable, a longtime supporter, waited more than a year for "Smoothie's" spot.



Old Friends Stick Together: Fabulous Strike, Sokitumi Samurai & Awesome Gem
© Photo Laura Battles



Palmer's Approach arrives at his forever home, with Assistant Farm Manager Carole Oates leading the way. ©Old Friends Photo

We just worked out a place for Winning Dubai, who was part of the herd affected by Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico.

And, if everything keeps working out, we'll be able to create more room for more deserving retirees soon. We are currently working to raise funds in order to prepare the infrastructure for an adjacent 90 acres. Thanks to Ron Wallace, R. W. Hicks and their crew, along with RedBrand fence, we should have some new paddocks available soon.

Of course, saying "no" costs nothing. Saying "yes" costs a lot. And it's worth every penny. It's only through the financial fuel provided by our old friends, that we're able to make our way into a bigger and better future.

There's not a single morning that I don't wake up and give thanks for everything these horses have given me and you. And I don't mean just Silver Charm and the rest of our champions. I mean Z Dager and Catlaunch and Riva Way and Summer Attraction and, of course, Little Silver Charm.

I fully appreciate whatever you can do to help us to continue providing a deserving home to even more Thoroughbreds here at Old Friends, where they can give us the awesome privilege of a respectful, deserving retirement.

—Michael



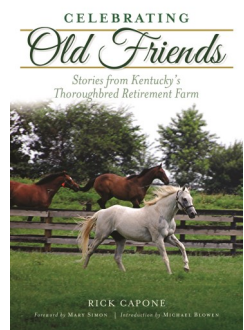
Michael Blowen
President & Founder

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Hot Off The Press!
Celebrating Old Friends
by Rick Capone

The Sequel to *History of Old Friends*
Available Now!

The World according to *Little Silver Charm*



Little Silver Charm
© Laura Battles

People are always asking me: What are you? Are you a miniature horse? A Shetland pony? A combination of both? Or something else?

My mother never told me much about my ancestry. She said that she met my father only once. I guess you could say I'm the product of a whirlwind romance. He was the strong, silent type, she said, and didn't share anything about his background during their brief encounter.

I sometimes like to imagine that I am descended from the miniature horses bred in centuries past to amuse royal children in the courts of Europe. I may be a little short in the leg but my bearing, in case you haven't noticed, is strikingly aristocratic. Nevertheless I pride myself on my humility. As Old Friends' official spokeshorse I can't give myself airs, unlike certain famous stallions around this farm. I will mention no names, but I think you can guess who I'm talking about.

One day I was hanging around the kitchen, trying to score a few gingersnaps, when I heard someone on TV talking about little horses.

I usually confine my television viewing to major Thoroughbred races and Masterpiece Theater, plus educational programming like "Game of Thrones" and the crime channel. But this program caught my attention because these little horses looked so much like me.

It was a story about Faroe ponies, a breed that lives on the Faroe Islands, a remote, windswept, treeless chain located in the North Sea between Iceland and Scotland. The story didn't go into a lot of detail. I needed to know more. So I commissioned my so-called biographer to do some research. It seemed like the least she could do since she appears to have abandoned the planned full-scale, tell-all, warts-and-all biography of yours truly that she was supposed to be writing. Not that I have any warts. That's just a figure of speech.

Faroe ponies, she found, are hardy, long-lived, friendly, adaptable, smart and sure-footed. Sound like anyone we know?

They are extremely strong. Because of their small size and their strength many were exported to Great Britain to work in the mines. They nearly became extinct on the Faroe Islands, but thanks to a breeding program they are making a comeback. Suddenly it all fell into place. I could imagine the scene, my ancestors herded onto a boat, put to work in the mines. Then, one day, a wealthy American visitor, decides to bring home a particularly adorable pony as a gift for his little daughter. Some time later my forbear steps off his benefactor's yacht when it lands in America, land of opportunity, even for little horses.

Just call me American Faroe. Or don't, actually. I'd hate anyone to think that I might try to take advantage of that other horse's celebrity.

I never sought fame, it just came to me. I don't revel in it, except on special occasions. Whenever I feel I'm in danger of developing a "big head," I remind myself that while I may be one of the most famous little horses in the world, millions of people have never heard of me. It's a sobering thought.



The Grit of Archie's Echo

Old Friend retiree Archie's Echo competed for modest purses at small-time tracks. From ages three to six he worked hard, won some, and lost some. Like many horses, he passed through several ownerships and trainers' barns, retiring in 1995 with 7 wins and \$32,324 in earnings. Twenty years later, he turned up at a slaughter auction facility. By the look of him, Archie's recent history had been rough, and ulceration had blinded one eye. PARX Racing Vice President Sam Elliott bought the 26-year-old and with the help of Turning For Home and trainer Lorita Lindemann, facilitated his retirement to Old Friends. We thank all whose efforts and financial support have provided Archie with a secure, dignified home for the rest of his life.



To Archie With Love, by Dr. Valerie Nicholson

When Archie's Echo arrived at Old Friends in June 2015, he was skin and bones. My husband, Dr. Brent Haskell, and I drove by the day he arrived and Dr. Waldrige was examining him. We first became acquainted with Archie when we went to the barn in the mornings to pick out the best alfalfa hay flake we could find for our special Old Friends horse, Francis (aka Do One Dance). As time went by, we continued to look in on Archie, and soon decided to actively support him.

In 2016 Archie began having issues with his teeth,



Archie's Echo © Laura Battles

which led to digestive difficulties. After a dental consultation with Dr. Brad Tanner of Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital, the decision was made to remove Archie's front teeth. Assistant Farm Manager Carole Oates prepped him for surgery, and Brent and I and stayed with him for the 4-hour surgery. He had a rough recovery period, but his inherent toughness and the amazing care of staffers Carole, Antonio, Tammy, James and Snowden pulled him through.

Early this summer Archie was well enough to spend his days outside, grazing happily with his back teeth. A month ago, Archie moved in with Dinard and Early Pioneer. There is plenty of space to run in his paddock, and, as Brent said last week, Archie has "discovered his inner horse". He continues to be the loving boy we all know, but is learning to be a horse again, with his own personality, independence, and interdependence with "his herd". Volunteer Beth Shannon told me "he has spunk", and it is this spunk that has kept him evolving through all the challenges he has faced.

Archie is a role model for us all. He has kept his kindness and resilience through many difficult moments, both health-wise and man-made, and he has adapted. We are so blessed to have him in our lives.



Here's How You Can Support Archie's Echo & All of Our Old Friends!

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Old Friends is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Your contribution is tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

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Old Friends

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Old Friends is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to providing safe harbor & dignified retirement to Thoroughbreds whose racing & breeding careers have come to an end.



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