

Old Friends

Thoroughbred Retirement in Georgetown, Kentucky

Accredited by Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance (TAA)



Spring 2022

A Message from Michael Blowen

A few days ago, while I was walking up to see Silver Charm, a very nice visitor from Texas exclaimed, "These horses must be very grateful to you!"

Immediately, I replied, "It's exactly the opposite. I'm so grateful to him and all of them." And it's true. And it's so much more than that.

Old Friends owes so much to so many. We have much to be grateful for. Of course, first are the horses, and the people who trust us to care for them. Without them, there's nothing.

Our supporters donate hard-earned money so we can afford to give our retirees the diet and space and health care they certainly earned during their careers. This winter your

commitment enabled us to undertake a major paddock upgrade, as fencers have been busily replacing dilapidated planks and posts. And we are working on additional expansion to bring more horses on board.

In 2021 we enjoyed a return to some normalcy as we were able to open on a limited basis for tours. In 2022, we look forward to even more visitors meeting our stars for the first time, or perhaps reconnecting with an old friend. As visitors, you support us with your kind words and dollars that are the fuel we run on.

There are the friends (I hesitate to call them employees) here every day, even in the cruelest weather, to make sure all the services are performed to keep the horses healthy. Antonio, Bill, James, Tammy, Billy, Zach, Marisa, Beth, Greg, Cindy, Grace, and J.R. are true heroes to our horses.

As I write this message, we are anticipating what we hope will be the final significant winter event of the season. Despite the stormy forecast, when I look out the Old Friends window and see our retirees waiting somewhat impatiently for the bluegrass of Spring to make an appearance, I also see the brightest future in our history, thanks to all of you.



Michael Blowen
President & Founder

Personally, I'm grateful to everyone who allows me to wake up every morning with a purpose in life and a smile on my face. I'm grateful for the daily joy that grows from the privilege of experiencing the gratitude and appreciation you extend to our retirees. Thank you.

Michael



Photo © Laura Battles

Elder statesman YOU AND I celebrated his 31st birthday on February 14.



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www.oldfriendsequine.org

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



Meet Our Newest Old Friends

Winter has brought not only challenging weather conditions, but also a steady stream of new retirees ready to begin the next chapter in their lives. They come from many circumstances with one thing in common—your commitment has helped make the dignified retirement they deserve a reality.

We are excited to introduce you to these **9(!)** new Old Friends:



Photo © Old Friends Farm

Hair of the Cat (6) came to Old Friends via the auspices of the great folks at CARMA which helps horses who have raced in the Golden State.



Photo © Laura Battles

Brandothebartender (9) is a California-bred and raced multiple stakes winner. When it was time to retire, his owners visited Old Friends & asked if he could retire here. We said "Yes"!



Photo © Old Friends Farm

Amelia's Wild Ride (11) is a graded stakes winner who made 70 starts in his nine-year career. He is making himself at home at our MHG Annex.



Photo © Laura Battles

El Gato Malo (17) won the G3 Lone Star Derby and \$650K+ for our friends at West Point Thoroughbreds. He arrived in February.



Photo © Laura Battles

Stubbins (6) raced coast-to-coast in a 16 race, four-year career. He was victorious in Keeneland's Woodford Stakes, and earned over \$550K. The extremely photogenic Stubbins arrived in February.



Photo © Laura Battles

Paddy O'Prodigy (9) was winless in four career starts. He arrived in January and has already developed a promising friendship with Boule d'Or.

Three retired broodmares from John and Debbie Oxley's Fawn Leap Farm arrived at Old Friends in December. **For All We Know** (20), a daughter of Stephen Got Even, won the G2 Lexus Raven Run at Keeneland and produced five foals before being retired. **Causeway Lady** (18), a daughter of Giant's Causeway, had 10 foals by sires such as Bernardini, Tapit, American Pharoah, and Pioneer of The Nile in her 12 year broodmare career. **Eccellenza** (21) was a G1 winner in her native Chile before arriving in the U.S. in 2005. She produced four foals, all by Sky Mesa, before the conclusion of her broodmare career.

♥ We have sadly said good-bye to these wonderful Old Friends ♥

It was our privilege to care for them.

Photos © Laura Battles



Affirmed Success
1994-2022



Albert the Great
1997-2021



Alphabet Soup
1991-2022



Discreet Hero
1998-2021



Northern Stone
1992-2021



Popcorn Deelites
1998-2022



Ferocious Won
2003-2022

Old Friends is honored to have been chosen as
the final resting place for Zedan Racing Stable's
MEDINA SPIRIT.



Interment in the
Nikki Bacharach Memorial Garden at Old Friends
April 5, 2022

The public is invited to attend an
Open House from 12:30-2:30 pm.

Memory Lane: Brick by Brick

Nikki Bacharach Memorial Garden at Old Friends



We are thrilled to share with you the progress that has made Memory Lane a reality. To date, over 175 bricks have been carefully placed in a specially crafted design. They provide a powerful visual welcome to visitors experiencing this hallowed place at Old Friends.

Join us on Memory Lane and memorialize your loved ones, pets, or special occasions with your own custom brick in the Nikki Bacharach Memorial Garden at Old Friends, where champions are celebrated.

Find out more and order your brick:
www.oldfriendsequine.org/memorylane.html



Not So Good Grief

by Cynthia Grisolia

Loss of any kind is never easy. But the loss of a loved one is, perhaps, the most difficult to bear. And while we may not think of animals experiencing bereavement like humans, the fact is, they do. There has been increasing scientific evidence of animals suffering the passing of an offspring or herd mate. Images of the Orca Tahelqua clinging to the corpse of her dead calf off the coast of Vancouver Island made news around the world in 2018. Elephants are known for visiting the remains of family members and carrying out what looks like a funeral vigil. In general, the more social the species, the more likely they will behave in a manner that could be described as grieving—and horses are, by definition, social herd animals. So when two of our most beloved residents passed away this winter, leaving behind a close friend to mourn, we worried about the survivors recovery and future well-being.

Popcorn Deelites, the *Seabiscuit* star who died due to a bout with colic on January 20, had been turned out with two-time Eddie Read Handicap winner Special Ring since Old Friends arrived at Dream Chase Farm in 2006. In their 16-year relationship—a union characterized by playing, eating together, grooming one another, and vying for the attention of visitors—Ring had become dependent on Pops to be not only his companion, but safe keeper. Pops was the leader, the one who would



check out anything new and deem it benign. When Pops left the paddock—at first brought into the

barn to treat a chronic foot infection and then later euthanized—there was no question in our minds that his good pal was bereft. He hollered constantly, as if to say “where are you?” He paced the fence line, and seemed anxiety-ridden. “We could hear him from the house all night,” says Old Friends’s founder Michael Blowen. “His pain was apparent.”

Not eight days later, our Breeders’ Cup Classic Champion Alphabet Soup, at age 31, succumbed to the kidney disease that had plagued him for years.

With this passing, his unlikely companion, the Italian donkey Gorgeous George, was abandoned for the second time in his life—the first when he lost his original owner William Crump a few years ago. Alone again, he, too, appeared visibly dejected. “He wasn’t eating well at all,” reports Farm Manager Antonio Marin. “He got very depressed, and just kept calling for his best friend.”

But time, as they say, heals all wounds. And animals just may accept and adapt to loss far better than we

humans. In the weeks since the deaths of their friends, both Special



Ring and George have begun to adjust and find a way to, well, love again.

Stubbins, who won the G2 Woodford Stakes at Keeneland in 2019, was new to Old Friends in early February, sent to us from trainer Doug O’Neil after recovering at Margaux Farm in Midway, KY from an injury. The dark bay son of Morning Line was suffering his own losses—leaving his training barn and those who cared for him, recovering from an injury—and was likely kind of lonely himself. He seemed a perfect new companion for Special Ring. To date, the duo is getting along swimmingly. No pacing has been seen or hollering heard.

George, meanwhile, has moved in with multiple graded stakes winner Ide. The giant chestnut has warmed up to his new little friend, and so have the neighbors—Patch and Stormy Liberal—who seem to think George is a delightful novelty.

Whether or not they remember or will continue to miss their old friends we’ll never know, but we do know their broken hearts are on the mend.

“Grief can be a terrible weight for any creature to endure,” said Professor Barbara J. King, author of the book *How Animals Grieve*. “At the same time, it telegraphs to the world the power of a love once shared.”

Indeed.

Photos © Laura Battles

Birthday Boys



You and I turned 31 on February 14, Valentine's Day, and over 100 fans showed their love by sending him birthday cards and Valentines. Thank you to everyone who helped us commemorate the longevity of this amazing horse!



On February 22 it was **Silver Charm's** turn. Over 125 people from 24 states sent entries for his party contest drawing. And, on the big day, 28 of his closest friends descended on the farm to help him celebrate his 28th birthday!



It's Mud Season!



Arson Squad



Silver Charm



Gold Round



Birdstone

California Suave

by Cynthia Grisolia

If your name happens to be Brando, let's face it, you're going to be suave as hell. Case in point: One of our newest retirees, Brandothebartender, whose good looks, backstory, and Cinderella-like career spanning six years on the track are the stuff of smooth drama.

The bay gelding by Tribal Rule joined our ranks in December of 2021, just after a minor injury put his career on hold and owners, the partnership of Flawless Racing, decided to not risk it and retire their horse who was about to come 9-years-old. Bred in California by John R. Haagsma and trainer Wesley Ward, and conditioned by Craig Dollase, Brandothebartender finished his racing reign winning 10 of his 47 starts—including a lickety-split contest against Quarter Horses at Los Alamitos--and earning \$782,464.

Flawless Racing, made up of partners Brian Flanagan, Joe Letizia, Tim Aldrich, and Jerry Weseloh ("The first letters of our last names spells Flaw," explains Weseloh, "but we didn't want to name the partnership 'Flawed' Racing so we went with Flawless.") and good friend and consultant Michael Jarvis claimed Brandothebartender in 2018. "We were looking for a horse that summer at Del Mar," says Weseloh. "Fortunately, we were 'out shook' a few times on other claims, and simply got lucky as there were six claims for Brando that day. When we won the shake we actually cheered out loud like we had won a race!"

The gelding quickly kept the celebration going by winning the California Flag Handicap at Santa Anita in October of that year, earning \$60,000 for his new owners. In all, Brando captured four black-type contests for Flawless—a level of success the partners never expected. "When we first got into horse ownership our goal was just to win a race," says Weseloh. "But Brando gave us so many great memories. He brought family, friends, and fans together." Thanks to size of the partnership and the casual, boutique environment at Dollase's barn, Weseloh says Brando just became like a member of the family.

"My wife Mary and I loved spending time at the

barn," says Weseloh, "and all the partners loved sharing the experience with friends and family. We got to see firsthand how well Craig and Brando's groom, Angel, took care of him."

Brando's charming personality also helped win over the grooms, horseman, and other employees on the backstretch. "He was beloved," adds Weseloh.

In the spring of 2021, Brando captured two of his stakes wins: The Sensational Star and the Crystal Waters, both at Santa Anita. While he seemed to be on a roll, Flawless knew that Brando's career would soon be winding down. Weseloh contacted Old Friends about future retirement options, but still expected the gelding to continue racing into

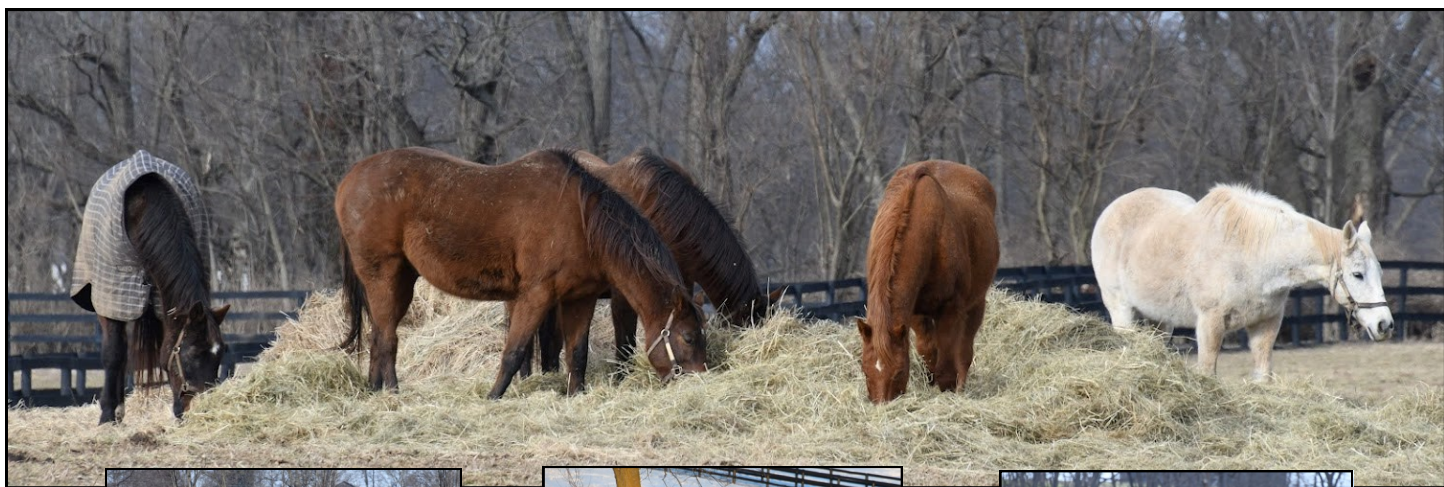
2022. Alas, that was not to be. But in July, before suffering a training injury, Brando gave his owners the biggest thrill of all: winning the California Dreaming Stakes at Del Mar. "To win the biggest race of the meet for older Cal-Bred Turf horses at our home track at Del Mar in front of family and friends—it gives me goose bumps," says Weseloh. "The emotions we all experienced as he crossed the finish line will never be forgotten. It carried down to the winner's circle and eventually into the Champagne Room at Del Mar where the party continued. It turned out to be the last race of Brando's career. He certainly went out on top. A true champion on the track and in our hearts."

An honest, older horse with a hard-trying style, needless to say Brando had earned a legion

of fans on the Southern California circuit--fans we hope will soon come see their West Coast hero. We know the Flawless guys will be here. "I can't wait to visit him and see what his personality is like as he settles into his forever home," says Weseloh. For now, Brando is acclimating fast to his new lifestyle and his new herd, which includes New York stars Kharafa and King Kreesa. But despite all that East Coast cred, we're pretty sure Brando is still the most debonair of the bunch.

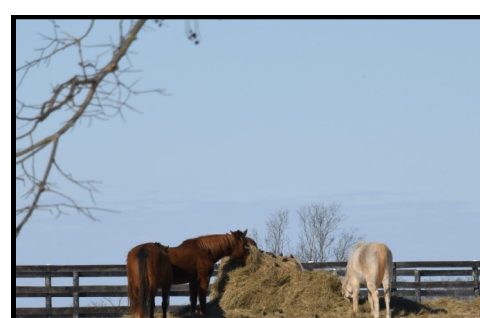


California newcomer Brandothebartender, shown with his new BFF Hair of the Cat.



Hey Hay!

Did you give a round or square hay bale or make a general donation from our Holiday Giving Tree? Look what you did! Our retirees say "thank you." All 130+ of them!



Photos © Laura Battles

What's Happening in New York Old Friends at Cabin Creek

Old Friends at Cabin Creek, the Bobby Frankel Division, located just minutes from Saratoga Race Course, is Saratoga County's only thoroughbred retirement farm and one of the few that will take thoroughbred stallions. We provide a dignified retirement for all racehorses, both known and unknown, and are open to the public year round.

News

31-year-old Zippy Chippy continues to make headlines. A gelding born in New York, Zippy is best known for being winless in 100 attempts on the racetrack. His losing streak made him famous; so famous that he had a following: people who would go to all his races, some hoping for the streak to end, and others just looking to see how long he would go on losing. For the optimists who hoped for a winning race, that dream never came true. Zippy retired to Old Friends at Cabin Creek in 2010 and lives happily with his best friend, Red Down South.



Fast-forward to September of 2021, and Zippy took on another race when he was nominated for the Do-Gooders Award presented by *Saratoga Living Magazine*. Facing 10 other do-gooders from the Capital Region, Zippy didn't win this race either, placing fourth, but in the process shining a big spotlight on Thoroughbred aftercare. Congratulations Zip!

Visit

We have re-opened for tours! Come on out and visit our retirees on **Saturdays from 12-3:00 pm**. We continue to follow COVID protocols and request unvaccinated folks wear masks.

Events

Annual Birthday Party: Saturday · April 12 · 12-3:00 pm
Join us for birthday festivities, visits with the boys, soup and birthday cake. Your \$10 donation appreciated.

3rd Annual Kentucky Derby Fundraiser Cocktail Party
on Saturday, May 7, at the home of Rosanne Frieri in Richmond, MA. Catering by KJ Nosh featuring southern cuisine, music provided by Whiskey City, and a silent auction. Tickets \$135.00 from Old Friends at Cabin Creek or by calling Rosanne at 413-347-2290.

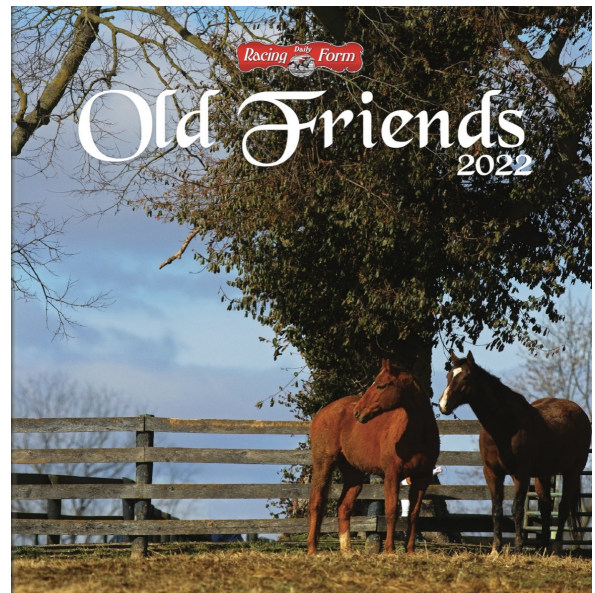
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New for 2022



Thoroughbred
AFTERCARE ALLIANCE
OLD FRIENDS IS AN ACCREDITED AFTERCARE ORGANIZATION

The 10th Annual Daily Racing Form/Old Friends 2022 Magazine Is Here! featuring . . .

- Landmarks in the History of Old Friends
- The Specialists: Our Retirees Do It All
- Tales From The Tours
- What Love Does to You
- Barbara Livingston's Life at Old Friends
- Photos and Thumbnails of 125+ Old Friends retirees
- Old Friends by the Numbers
- Little Silver Charm
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- . . . and more!

\$15.00 (includes shipping)

To order:

Call: 502-863-1775
Website: www.oldfriendsequine.org
eBay: oldfriendsfarmgiftshop

The World according to Little Silver Charm

You know me. I never complain. But lately I'm feeling just a wee bit overwhelmed. My many, many jobs here at Old Friends have me on the run, racing from place to place. Sometimes I have to pause and ask myself: Where am I? What am I supposed to be doing now?

Sadly, I am not as young as I used to be, although seldom a day goes by when someone doesn't comment upon my uncannily youthful appearance. But the fact is the steady drumbeat of my many responsibilities here at Old Friends is grinding me down.

I wear so many hats, too many. Official Old Friends greeter. Retirement consultant. Social and media influencer. Author. Supermodel. Handicapping expert. Hoofcare consultant. Landscaper. Michael's personal trainer.

Why do I do it all? It's not a matter of ego, as some have suggested. I do it because I am entirely devoted to Old Friends. And the bald guy would be lost without me.

GUIDING GURUS

If you have visited Old Friends and taken a tour, you have met one of our wonderful volunteer tour guides. They are unrivaled when it comes to greeting visitors, showing them around the farm, and sharing—with compassion and enthusiasm, not to mention great aplomb—the tales of victories, agonies of defeats, and human narratives behind the careers of our equine athletes. Come out for a tour and let them introduce you to our fabulous retirees!

Michael's success at Old Friends serves my mission to honor the centuries-long relationship humans have had with horses. To give the horse a respectful retirement. To thank the horse for its willingness to partner with and serve us humans. The horse lifts us, and makes our dreams come true. And so I moved to Kentucky 10 years after my first visit.

My first day as a fledgling tour guide I thought, "How am I going to remember the horse's names, much less their race wins and their bloodlines?" I call the race world the most romantic sport with the highest highs and the lowest lows. Most importantly, I now know their names, and I love every one of them, the lucky horses who come here.

If you believe, as I do, that life should be joy-filled, and that miracles and magic exist, volunteering at Old Friends is one wonderful way to witness the manifestation of those beliefs. — **Jane McClaren, Tour Guide**



Jane gets Little Silver Charm ready to greet his fans.

save the date

May 8, 2022

Old Friends Homecoming

17th Annual Celebration

HOME COMING

12 noon to 4 pm

Barbecue from Proud Mary's

Live Music

Silent and Live Auction

Art Tent · Book Sale

Cool Junk · Hot Buys · Free Stuff

Tickets are \$40 to the general public and must be reserved in advance.

(Free to Old Friends members)

Reserve online: oldfriendsequine.org

November 6, 2022 Breeders' Cup Party



Join us the day after Keeneland's two-day Breeders' Cup bash. Details to follow.

Thanks to you, we've been busy! Visual perspective of our major fence replacement project and expansion under direction of Little Silver Charm. More horses!



Horses Healthy at Home: Our Winter Wonderland

Photos © Laura Battles



Silver Charm



Disturbingthepeace



Area 51 and the February Snows



Persie and Mr. Jordan



Sun King



How You Can Help Old Friends

Friends for All Seasons

Is monthly giving right for you? Do you believe in dignified equine retirement to a forever home and the value of steadfast, reliable partnerships? Sign up as a monthly donor and receive a gift of Old Friends bookmarks.



Memory Lane: Brick by Brick
Nikki Bacharach Memorial Garden at Old Friends
 Choose your brick size, color, graphic and text to create a lasting legacy!



www.oldfriendsequine.org

Clubhouse Annual Membership

Your \$150 membership includes leather & brass keytag, free tours, discount admission to Homecoming in May, and free general admission to Kentucky Derby Museum in Louisville, KY and National Museum of Racing & Hall of Fame in Saratoga Springs, NY.



The Hoof Patrol

Support the 500+ hooves of Old Friends retirees who have short/long-term hoof issues. Hoof Patrol keychain, email updates, videos, and more!

Bronze (\$50)
Silver (\$125) • Gold (\$250)
 Membership levels



Old girlFriends Society

Do you appreciate great mares? Your \$100 lifetime membership donation includes an 8 x 10 photo of one of our *Old girlFriends*, an annual visit to the mares paddock, and your name on the *Old girlFriends* web page!



Shares for Life

Show your love for an Old Friends horse! Donate \$100 to support your favorite horse and you'll receive a photo of your horse and a certificate suitable for framing.



Thank You for Supporting Our Horses!

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

General Use Donation \$ _____

Daily Racing Form/Old Friends Magazine (\$15.00) _____

Clubhouse Annual Membership (\$150.00) _____

The Hoof Patrol \$ _____

Gold (\$250) Silver (\$125) Bronze (\$50)

Shares for Life (\$100.00) Horse: _____

Little Silver Charm & Gorgeous George (\$25.00 each)

Old girlFriends Society (\$100.00) _____

Friend for All Seasons Monthly Donor (credit card)

Indicate amount to be charged monthly \$ _____

Other \$ _____ Purpose _____

☐ Check enclosed ☐ Credit Card

Account number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ CVV# _____

TOTAL \$ _____

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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Georgetown, KY 40324
(502) 863-1775

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



Old Friends 2022 Tours

Old Friends tours comply with Commonwealth of Kentucky public health COVID-19 safety guidelines. Our tours are outdoors and socially distanced.

Old Friends Tour Menu

Reservations Required For All Tours

General Tours and Founder's Tours booked **ONLY** on our website:
www.oldfriendsequine.org/tours.html

General Tours

Thursday-Friday-Saturday-Sunday
10:00am • 11:00am • 1:00pm
Limited Availability • \$25 per person
90 minutes • Meet 12-15 horses

Buses and Large Groups

Bus and group touring opportunities
Pricing varies by group size
For information and to book:
Call 502-863-1775



Founder's Tours with Michael

Fridays • 12:00 pm
Limited Availability • \$75 per person
90 minutes • Meet 12-15 horses

Private Tours

Single-party tour for groups of 10 and under
Limited availability • \$50 per person
Children 11 and under free
For information and to book:
Call 502-863-1775