

# Old Friends

Eclipse Award-Winning Thoroughbred Retirement

Accredited by Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance (TAA)



Summer 2023

## A Message from Michael Blowen

Here at Old Friends, we are known for permanently retiring our residents. However, in the case of Sandy, The Wonder Horse, we've made an exception.

Let's go back about eight years. Terry's, one of the last great five-and-dimes in history, was going out of business. Terry Smith, the master-of-ceremonies for his namesake emporium, was retiring so I half-jokingly commented that it would be great if Sandy, the long-time resident, and a stakeswinning mechanical horse could be retired to Old Friends. He smiled and explained that his grand-children loved Sandy and he couldn't possibly part with one of Versailles' most popular residents. That was then. This is now.

Last week, Terry called and asked if we still wanted Sandy because his grandchildren have all

grown up and he thought the veteran campaigner would like Old Friends. We jumped at the chance. A few days later, James picked him up and we sent him to our good friend Steve over at Horse Cents for some sprucing up and minor repairs. And Steve had a great idea. Why not a makeover? So, as I write this, Sandy is being re-purposed to another career as a Lava Man impersonator. In another few weeks, he should be ready to accept visitors in the beautifully renovated Ms. Josephine Abercrombie Center at Old Friends. He'll also be our only retiree available for riding.

We're very excited that fan-favorite Rated R Superstar has just arrived. The 10-year-old gelding, winner of 13 races including 10 stakes, and \$1.8 million, was generously donated to us by Danny and Allison Caldwell. They realized that Rated R Superstar was sound and healthy and could certainly continue to compete but they wanted to do what they thought was best for their veteran. We are so grateful to be

chosen as his retirement home.

And, big news! We're expanding Old Friends to farmland which is close to one of our existing facilties. This will give us more space for more retirees. And that, after all, is our major goal.

Thank you all for making this great place even greater.



Iron-horse (126 starts) and aspiring somnambulist Mikethespike holding back a yawn, waiting on Summer.



Old Friends Board of Directors
President: Michael Blowen
Vice President: Bill Van Den Dool
Secretary: Barbara Fossum
Treasurer: Pat Riley

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#### Chairman: Cynthia Grisolia

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Newsletter Production: Barbara Fossum © 2023 Old Friends Inc.

> Old Friends, Inc. 1841 Payne's Depot Rd Georgetown, KY 40324

(502) 863-1775 www.oldfriendsequine.org

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



Michael Blowen President & Founder



## Meet Our Newest Old Friends



We are excited to introduce you to our newest Old Friends, 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 six new Old Friends:



Photo © Old Friends

Even the Score (25). A multiple G2winning son of Unbridled's Song, Even the Score was the last horse residing at Millennium Farm, prior to the farm being sold. He arrived to permanent retirement in March.



Photo © Mary E. Greene

Analyze It (8) earned just shy of \$1 million as a stakes-winner from coastto-coast (Del Mar. Keeneland. Monmouth), Described by his connections as "professional", Al aced his entrance exam & settled right in!



Photo © Mary E. Greene

V. E. Day (12) claimed fame by winning the 2014 Travers, the mid-Summer Derby, by a nose over favored Wicked Strong. After a brief stud career, he relocated to his paddock at Old Friends in June. He's a perfect fit!

We have sadly said good-bye to these

wonderful Old Friends.

It was our privilege to care for them.



Photo © Mary E. Greene

Free as a Bird (14), won six consecutive listed stakes, from Florida to Kentucky to New York, at ages five and six. One of the last horses owned by the Valando Stables, she arrived in



and winning \$270,513 before bone bruising ended his career. He June from our friend David Ingordo.

is just that, a racing superstar with a huge following. We thank Danny and Allison Caldwell for retiring him to Old Friends so that his many fans can

meet him.

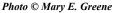
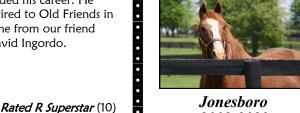




Photo © Mary E. Greene

Own Agenda (8) raced 18 times over five years, retired to Old Friends in



2002-2023

Disturbingthepeace

1998-2023



Mystery Trip 2001-2023



Nicer Than Ever 2005-2023



Saratoga Episode 2001-2023 

# Around Spring



Kentucky Derby elder statesman Silver Charm, drew crowds during Derby week. As always.



Preakness Day at Pimlico had Be Better, owned by our good friend Mike Repole, running away with the Old Friends Purse and earning guaranteed retirement at Old Friends! When he's ready, we'll be here.



Memorial Day 2023
Michael and
Little Silver Charm
greeting the crowd
gathered for our
annual remembrance
of horses lost in
the past year.



May 7 saw our traditional day after Derby party with our 18th Annual Homecoming. We celebrated with friends, food, auctions, music, horses, and more! Thanks to our volunteers and staff who made it all happen!









Tragedy struck Kentucky's Scott County in May, when Deputy Caleb Conley was killed in the line of duty. A leader in his community, Silver Charm stepped up and offered a halter in support of Deputy Conley's family. A long-time Old Friends supporter was the winning bidder on eBay, and a \$1,000 check was presented to Scott County Sheriff Tony Hampton in June.

## Arlington's Million

## An Old Friends Tribute to Arlington Park by Mary Gannon

Arlington Park served as a pillar in the racing community since it's opening in 1927 in the Chicago suburb of Arlington Heights, Illinois. In 1934, it was the first racetrack in Illinois history to run turf races, and in the following decades, held one of the most prestigious and coveted turf races in horse racing history. On a warm August day in 1981, the first running of the G1 Arlington Million was won by John Henry, who set the stage for future turf champions to take the title of Arlington Million winner. At one-and-one quarter miles on the turf, the Million was a summer tradition, run at Arlington Park until it's closure in 2021. Demolition of the venerable Park began in June. In tribute, we are recognizing four Arlington Million winners with connections to Old Friends.

#### The Pizza Man

Foaled in 2009 and bred by Richard and Karen Papiese of Midwest Thoroughbreds, The Pizza Man got his mem-orable name because the Papieses thought the blaze on his forehead looked like a slice of pizza. The late Roger-Brueggemann trained The Pizza Man, and as Michael Blowen put it, "The Pizza Man didn't hit his stride until his 5-year-old campaign." Once he did, The Pizza Man was a force to be reckoned with on the turf.

The Pizza Man made history when he won the Arlington Million in 2015 by a neck, becoming the only Illinois-bred to win it. Arlington Park's track announcer, John Dooley, fondly recounted The Pizza Man's win: "My favorite memory of The Pizza Man will always be the day he won the G1 Arlington Million at Arlington.

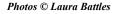
Despite his past stakes victories and prowess over the Arlington course, racing on that August day was a different ball-game[.] In the spotlight, he started to make his run for [jockey] Florent Geroux [and] with three furlongs to go, you

could tell he was running for a place in Million lore. When the crowd that August day began to cheer and root him on to the finish, I saw it was about to happen, the first Illinois-bred to win the biggest race in the history of the state, and called, "Chicago's about to erupt." And that it did. With applause. With approval. The Pizza Man became a Million legend."

The Pizza Man retired from racing in September of 2017, in a ceremony at Arlington Park, and later worked as a stable pony for his trainer's barn. When asked about his reaction to The Pizza Man being retired to Old Friends, John Dooley said: "As a life long racing fan, I can relate to so many of the great names in thoroughbred racing over the years during their on-track careers, now retired[.] With Michael and all at Old Friends Farm, now giving these wonderful stakes winners, veterans, and fan favorites a happy home, after their time spent on the track, it was special to see The Pizza Man join them in Kentucky after his career as a betting favorite, a long shot at times, and race horse, was over."











The Pizza Man remains a fan favorite for visitors at Old Friends. Although Arlington Park is no more, John Dooley so beautifully described The Pizza Man's impact on Arlington Park's legacy: "The Pizza Man's Arlington Million win is etched in the thoroughbred history books. They can demolish the bricks and mortar of a venerable race course, but thanks to Old Friends Farm, horses like The Pizza Man, and those of us who witnessed it, the spirit lives on."

#### Little Mike

Little Mike gave his owner-breeder-trainer Carlo Vaccarezza an amazing string of victories including the Arlington Million in 2012. John Dooley recalls Little Mike's win against a field of impressive international competition: "The 2012 Arlington Million was a real International affair with horses racing for Ballydoyle, HRH Princess Haya of Jordan, Luca Cumani, Aidan O'Brien and John Gosden, tackling U.S. based horses, like Little Mike, coming to Arlington Park in Chicago for G1 fame and glory. Little Mike had been tearing it up in Florida and was now taking his turf stakes ability to the next level as a road warrior for the Vaccarezzas. He had the natural speed to lead and was ready to test the stayers of Europe and his American rivals over the 10 furlongs. Once they were off Little Mike put them right to the test. Ridden expertly by Ramon Dominguez, the son of Spanish Steps dared them to catch him if they can. No rival could. A front running victory for a Florida conquistador that would lead Little Mike later that season, for a first time to the West Coast, and a 17-to-1 victory in the G1 Breeders' Cup Turf at Santa Anita." Little Mike has been described by his Jockey, Ramon Dominguez, as "the horse we all dream of coming in contact with."

## Arlington's Million, continued

After his final race in 2016, Little Mike was retired to Old Friends. Owner Carlo Vaccarezza describes the day Little Mike joined Old Friends as "one of the toughest days of my life" when he unloaded Little Mike from the van one final time. John Dooley shares his feelings on Little Mike's retirement: "I still hear, time to time, from the Vaccarezza family



on social media when the topic of "Favorite Arlington Million" winners comes up, so I was happy to see Little Mike at Old Friends where he spends these days with so many other fan favorites and fellow Arlington Million winner The Pizza



Man. It was an honor to call the International Festival of Racing for 22 seasons at Arlington Park and Little Mike will forever be a part of my memory of those years there in Chicago."





Photos © Laura Battles

Little Mike shares a paddock with Game on Dude, and has the reputation on the farm as one of the sweetest and most affectionate horses at Old Friends. Everyone here can agree that watching Mike and Dude frolic around their paddock is one of the most joyful sights to see. His Arlington Million win attracts fans from all over, and his Arlington Park legacy lives on, as John Dooley illustrates: "In the Summer of 2012, with millions watching, the Florida bred with "Little" in his name, showed the world his natural speed, ability, and big heart. As Little Mike now roams at Old Friend Farm, his visitors can know, you don't always need a home course advantage. I came, I saw, I conquered."

#### Awad

In 1995, during his 5-year-old year, Awad made Arlington Park history by setting a track record of 1:58 3/5 with his Arlington Million win. Awad won by 2 1/4 lengths, racing against two Old Friends future residents, Tinners Way and Kiri's Clown.

Awad's trainer, David Donk fondly remembers his racing journey with Awad. "Wow, it's been over 30 years since Awad broke his maiden in the Pilgrim Stakes. Fay and I owe so much to Awad, who has given us so many wonderful memories. Little did we know that he would take us on a world tour of racing, winning races at Hialeah, Gulfstream, Belmont, and Arlington, along with two trips to Japan to run in the Japan Cup." Michael adds that if you call the Donks' home and no one answers, the answering machine message says "You've reached the home of Fay and David Donk in the house that Awad bought." In 2006, Awad was retired to Old Friends, where he lived until his passing n 2011. He is buried in the Old Friends cemetery at Dream Chase Farm.



Photo © Rick Capone



## Estrapade

We'd be remiss in not paying tribute to the great mare Estrapade, victress in the 1986 Million. She was the only mare to beat the boys, and she did it by a record five lengths.

Referred to as the "Queen of the Turf", Estrapade went on to have a successful broodmare career. Tragically, she died of a heart attack while being loaded onto a trailer on her way to retirement at Old Friends' Hurstland Farm. Michael asked that her remains be sent to Old Friends, and she was buried in our cemetery. As so often happens at Old Friends, life came full circle in 2014 when Holy Estrapade, a son of Estrapade and her final foal, arrived on the farm. And so it goes.

#### Finish Line

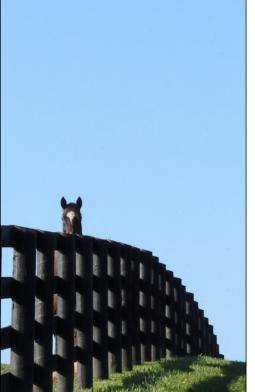
As we see the imagery of Arlington Park's demolition splashed across our news feeds, we remember champions that once reigned supreme in one of the world's most honored turf races. The legacy of Arlington Park lives on through the generations of families who grew up witnessing history in the making, and the Old Friends retirees that won the great Arlington Million.

# the 236 Life and Times on Dream Chase Farm









Through the camera lens of Mary E. Greene

Dogwood Blooms

St. Aloysius, Photon, Johannesbourbon

Flowering Fenceline

Silhouette

Fences Galore

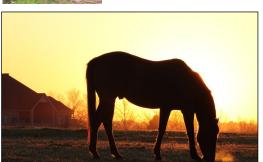
Cowbird

Woodlands

Morning Feed

Cougar Bait

Mystery Mare









## After a Close Call, Dixieland Squall Enjoying Retired Life by Rick Capone

Many people know David Cassidy as an actor, singer, and one of the stars of the 1970's TV show, The Partridge Family. However, what many people might not know is that he loved Thoroughbreds and horse racing. In fact, Cassidy, who lived in Saratoga Springs during the summer and was a New York breeder, purchased his first horse in 1973 while still on the TV show, according to an article on *BloodHorse.com*.



Photos © Rick Capone

During his breeding and racing days, according to the article, Cassidy owned a number of good horses either on his own or in partnership, including 2008 Black-Eyed Susan Stakes (G2) winner Sweet Vendetta,

In a partnership with friend Edward Lipton, Cassidy owned a beautiful chestnut mare named Dixieland Squall. Bred by Cassidy, Dixieland Squall, who was by Summer Squall – Rampart Street, by Dixieland Band, was foaled in New York on April 2, 2003, and trained by Gary C. Contessa.

Dixieland Squall raced five times as a two-year-old, but was never in the money. At three in 2006, Dixieland Squall raced seven times with one second and two thirds, all at Belmont Park. However, still trying hard in every race, she saved her best for last. On Oct. 4, she ran her heart out and got her first and only win in

a maiden claiming race at Belmont. Following that race, Dixieland Squall was retired with one win, one second, two thirds, and \$32,510 in earnings in 12 career starts.

As a broodmare, Dixieland Squall had 10 foals, which included Dixie Delta, who earned \$87,099 with 17 wins in 79 starts, and Cherokee Alphabet, who earned \$19,018 with two wins in 13 starts. Interestingly, Cherokee Alphabet's sire was Old Friends retiree, Alphabet Soup.

Not much is known about what happened to Dixieland Squall after her breeding career concluded. However, what is known is that she ended up in a bad situation, and the I Think I Love You Foundation stepped in to help her.

The I Think I Love You Animal Foundation, a 501c3 nonprofit organization based in New York, was created in memory of the late actor and singer David Cassidy, and provides financial support to animals in need of sanctuary or medical attention,

especially retired thoroughbred racehorses who need help out of bad situations. When they learned that Dixieland

Squall was on her way to the kill pen they stepped in to help.



"The I Think I Love You Animal Foundation was made aware of Dixieland Squall's situation through people in the horse community reaching out to The Foundation via social media," said Caren Hansmann, President of the Foundation. "Rescuing Dixieland Squall, once co-owned by David Cassidy for whom the Foundation was founded, was truly an accomplishment for us."

> According to Hansmann, "Rick Schosberg [Foundation board member] suggested Old Friends to The Foundation and, after researching it, we found it would be a beautiful retirement home for Dixieland. Rick is definitely a friend of our organization as he had assisted us in the past. We owe him a great amount of gratitude."

On Nov. 11, 2022, Dixieland Squall was sent to Jessie Burrell's South Haven Stables in Tennessee until she was transported to Old Friends. Today, Dixieland Squall is enjoying her retirement at Old Friends where she currently spends her days

with four other mares.

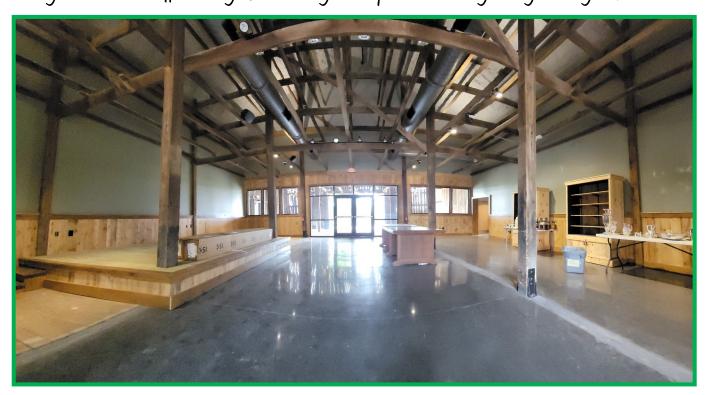
"About ten years ago, I met David Cassidy at Saratoga and was very impressed with both his knowledge of Thoroughbreds and his love of racing," said Michael Blowen, President and founder of Old Friends. "We would have gratefully retired Dixieland Squall, but knowing her connection to David just made it extra-special."



## Presenting

## The Ms. Josephine Abercrombie Center at Old Friends

For making our dreams come true, our sincere and deep gratitude to The Pin Oak Foundation, Corey Johnsen, Boyd Browning, John Backer, Clifford Barry, G. D. Hieronymus, Populous, Derek Engineering, and High Road Productions.











**Old Friends Photos** 

## It's NAP Time

Photos © Laura Battles









....ssshhhhhhhh!!!

## The World according to Sittle Silver Charm



The word "visionary" is often bandied about in the conversation about Old Friends. Inevitably Michael is credited with having the vision that made the Old Friends dream a reality. But the truth is that it was me—Me! Me! Me! - who came up with the idea of Old Friends and me who inspired Michael to make it happen. Michael has many wonderful qualities, but he wouldn't know a vision if he stepped on one. I have the vision thing.

Always have. It's a gift.

Which brings me to my most recent vision, the refurbishment of our old tobacco barn into a state-of-the-art welcome center. I planned it and supervised the construction, so

naturally everyone wanted to name it after me—The Little Silver Charm Center at Old Friends. I graciously declined the honor. Anyone who knows me will tell you that I am as modest as I am visionary. I suggested



that it be named after that great lady of Thoroughbred racing, Josephine Abercrombie. And so it will be. Thanks to 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!

I saw my first horse race on television, the Kentucky

Derby, when I was nine. As soon as the race started, I was captivated by the power, speed, and beauty of the horses. I was hooked. I fell in love with racing and the Thorough-



bred. Being an Old Friends tour guide means never having a dull moment. Some retirees are loving and fun. Some are not. We have our "hams", flirts, and "do not touch" mes. A carrot treat is always the end game. I enjoy visitors sharing their personal horse experiences. Over the years I have seen many horse "family photos" shared with pride and love. Being a tour guide is FUN! Who would I like to see at Old Friends? Shackleford. Lisa Wood. Tour Guide

## **Announcing**



Recently we introduced a line of unique greeting cards featuring Old Friends retirees. Thinking of how we could best share them with some of our special friends, we created Club HoofMark just for you! Now, with your annual membership of \$120, you will receive twelve one-of-a-kind cards



## **Club Higlights**

- Three Club HoofMark cards sent to you each quarter (July, October, February, and April). Plus some surprises along the way!
- On the Front: Graphically enhanced photo exclusive to Club HoofMark, adhered to colorful paper, with a dash of sparkle.
- On the Back: Profile of featured Old Friend.
- Inside: Blank.
- Card measures 5" x 7".
- Hand cut and folded 110 lb cardstock.
- Matching self-seal envelope.

Join us today and get ready to receive a special gift and the first of your magical three-packs!

# Old Friends Photo Books



Old Friends: Silver Charm Thirty pages with over 50 photos chronicling the story

photos chronicling the story of the 1997 Kentucky Derby winner's life in retirement, reflections on his personality, and much more.

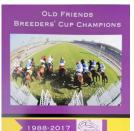
Price: \$29.00 (includes shipping)



Old Friends: Early Years

Features Old Friends founding stallions Awad, Sunshine Forever, Ogygian, Creator, Kiri's Clown, Fortunate Prospect, Taylor's Special Precisionist and Ruhlmann.

Price: \$24.00 (includes shipping)



Old Friends: Breeders 'Cup Champions

Featuring Classic winners Alphabet Soup, Awesome Again, and Black Tie Affair, plus Little Mike, Amazombie, Stormy Liberal, Work All Week and more!

**Price:** \$29.00 (includes shipping)

oldfriendsequine.org/store/





## How You Can Help Old Friends

On behalf of our more than 250 Old Friends retirees, thank you for considering a tax-deductible gift to help provide for the care of these deserving Thoroughbred athletes. By supporting our mission, you will help us expand our facility to benefit more horses, champions and unknowns alike. Whether you choose a general "where-most-needed" donation, or support a specific funding program, your donation will have an immediate impact on our horses and the quality of their lives. However you choose to help, thank you for caring about our horses!



## Clubhouse Annual Membership

Our Annual Membership program. \$150

#### The Hoof Patrol

Support the hoof health of our retirees.
Annual Membership Levels
Bronze (\$50) Silver (\$125) Gold (\$250)





## Old girlFriends Society

Support the great mares of Old Friends. Lifetime Membership \$100

### Shares for Life

Support your favorite Old Friend! \$100





### Memory Lane: Brick by Brick

Create a lasting legacy in our Nikki Bacharach Memorial Garden. \$125/\$225

www.oldfriendsequine.org/how-to-help/brick-by-brick/

#### Club HoofMark

Our line of exclusive, graphically enhanced collectible notecards.

Annual Membership \$120





## Feed for a Day Calendar

Help cover the daily cost to feed our retirees. Your text on your favorite day (call for availability) Annual Sponsorship \$100

## Friend for All Seasons

Is monthly giving right for you?
Dignified retirement, a forever home,
a steadfast, reliable partnership.
Answer—YES!



More information on these programs and other ways to help can be found at oldfriendsequine.org/how-to-help/.

## Thank You for Supporting Our Horses!

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	501(c)(3) charitable or		

tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. EIN 20-0049798

Old Friends, Inc. 1841 Paynes Depot Road, Georgetown, KY 40324 (502) 863-1775 • oldfriendsequine.org

7/2023

## Old Friends

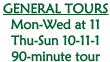
1841 Paynes Depot Road Georgetown, KY 40324 (502) 863-1775

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 2023 Tour Schedule

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED FOR ALL TOURS



\$25 per person Book Online



## **FOUNDER'S TOURS**

with Michael Fri at 12:00 90-minute tour \$75 per person Book Online

## **PRIVATE TOURS**

Customizable tour for groups of 10 and under. \$50 per person/children 11 and under free. Call to Book.

## **EVERY HORSE ON THE FARM TOURS**

A three-hour driving tour seeing every horse on the farm. Dates vary. Limited Availability. Book online.

#### **GROUP TOURS**

Buses, tour companies and large groups. 20+ people \$10/person; under 20 people \$15/person. Call to Book.

(502) 863-1775 · www.oldfriendsequine.org/tours.html