

Life with Old Friends

summer 2024



Eclipse Award-Winning Thoroughbred Retirement
in
Georgetown, Kentucky



Photo © Laura Battles

Little Mike and Game On Dude. Friendship in the Grass.

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Old Friends, Inc.

1841 Paynes Depot Rd

Georgetown, KY 40324

(502) 863-1775 • oldfriendsequine.org



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Eyes Forward—Family Life with John Nicholson

As I approach six months as the first president in the history of Old Friends not named Michael Blowen (a sobering thought that occurs to me fairly often), certain things are now becoming more and more clear to me. In fact, I may be beginning to understand the great secret of how Old Friends became the amazing institution it has become, and why I think it is poised to ascend to new and unimagined heights.

It has become apparent to me that every successful endeavor to this point for Old Friends, as well as those things which we are currently undertaking that hold such promise, all have one thing in common: The dedicated, passionate participation and support from a lot of people, bringing their unique talents, treasure and knowledge to bear for the benefit of these remarkable horses and the great sport of Thoroughbred racing.

I have heard, as have many of you, the wonderful and compelling stories from Michael about those key milestones in the founding and growth of Old Friends. These stories all have one thing in common, that our history is resplendent with special individuals who have done extraordinary deeds for our cause. It is testament to Michael's gift of inspiring a welcoming and inclusive spirit. That spirit continues today and exists everywhere and everyday at Old Friends.

It has been, and is, an affair of the heart for so many. It has been a large and sustained group effort at every level. There is no question but that there is a very real, meaningful, dedicated, heartfelt and true Old Friends family. Our family not only includes so many extraordinary human beings, but, as we know, our family includes all the special horses who live with us, have lived with us and will live with us in the decades to come.

I have been blessed to be able to witness our family in action every day and in so many different ways. There can be no better expression of our family attitude than those who work on our farms every day. I have been the leader of other equine organizations, but I have never encountered a group of people who, not only do so much with limited resources, but work so well together in the spirit of service to our horses and all that we stand for. All who care deeply for Old Friends should have the deepest level of respect and gratitude for these dedicated people. I know I do. I am privileged to be a part of this amazing team and watching them perform, problem solve, work together and provide such professional and competent care for our horses, gives me even more confidence that we have the team in place for all the great things that the future holds.

So, therefore, to everyone who has been so generous whether it be with your time, your talent or your treasure, or all of the above, I offer my gratitude on behalf of all of our family members, human and equine. Our noble army of volunteers fall within in the same category of extraordinary family

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Meet Our Newest Old Friends



Old Friends retirees come from many circumstances with one thing in common—your commitment has helped make the dignified retirement they deserve a reality. These new Old Friends are ready to begin the next chapter in their lives!

We are excited to introduce you to:



Photo © Laura Battles

McCraken (10) won the G2 Kentucky Jockey Club Stakes and over \$800K on the racetrack. He stood at stud with our good friends Airdrie Stud in Kentucky before retiring and arriving in March.



Photo © Mary Greene

Militarist (7) has strong Old Friends ties. His dam, Hay Jude called us home until her death in 2021, and half-brother Little Mike still holds court with Game on Dude in Paddock 4. Militarist arrived in July from owner Carlo Vaccarezza.



Photo © Mary Greene

Warrior's Reward (18) won the G1 Carter and over \$500k in his racing days. He stood stud in Kentucky, shuttled to Australia, and was at WynOaks Farm in Pennsylvania before arriving at Old Friends in July.



In Memoriam

We have sadly said good-bye to these wonderful Old Friends. It was our privilege to care for them.

Photos © Laura Battles and Old Friends



Ide
1993-2024



Even The Score
1998-2024



Sharoan
1995-2024



Hap
1996-2024



Riva Way
1998-2024



Unaccountable
2005-2024

Continued from Page 1-

members. They too, are a source of amazement. All of us know that without our volunteers, especially our tour guides, Old Friends, as we know it, simply would not exist.

Even beyond that, for me personally, I have been overwhelmingly impressed by the remarkable quality of those who so generously give us their time. I have already called upon their talents, including several individuals being valuable advisors and sources of information on a variety of subjects critical to our future. I know that many of our volunteers will be very much involved in the next exciting chapters of growth and expansion of Old Friends.

Certainly, our family extends beyond just the staff and volunteers. There could not be any more important people than those of you who have been financially generous to Old Friends. As we all know, even in the best of days, Old Friends has operated within the tightest of margins and often in an atmosphere of great uncertainty. But time and time again, special friends have stepped forward and Old Friends has been removed, at least for a while, from peril.

Finally, but vitally important, are the many souls who have always and will always deeply care and just be lovingly present. I speak gratefully of those who have participated in all kinds of different ways over the years. Your presence continues to be felt and you, too, will be critical members of the family in the heady years ahead.

I offer also, my invitation to you to join us in charting an extraordinary course for the future of Old Friends as we creatively, energetically and resolutely enter into an ambitious era of sustainable growth, always remaining at the vanguard of Thoroughbred Aftercare in the United States and throughout the world.

Although we may not know exactly what awaits us in the years ahead, we can be absolutely certain that all that we embark upon, will be undertaken in our family's spirit of respect and appreciation for each other and, most importantly, in devoted service to the horses we honor and revere.



I'll Have Another



Photo © Antonio Marin

Wow!

A long time ago I won a race.
A man named Governor Beshear
gave me a trophy.
Now I'm retired here in
Georgetown, and
Mrs. Beshear just brought me food.
They must really like me!

Old Friends Celebrates Preakness Day A New Old Friend for Life is Crowned



On May 18, Preakness Saturday at Pimlico Race Course, the second race of the day was the Old Friends Purse. The race featured a winner's purse of \$34,200, but perhaps more importantly, the winner would gain automatic entry to lifetime retirement at Old Friends. A longshot three-year old gelding named **Desvio**, won the 1 1/6 mile turf race by a length. Michael and John joined the happy owners, presenting a plate and julep cup to representatives of Stonelea Stable and Bonnie Rye Stable.

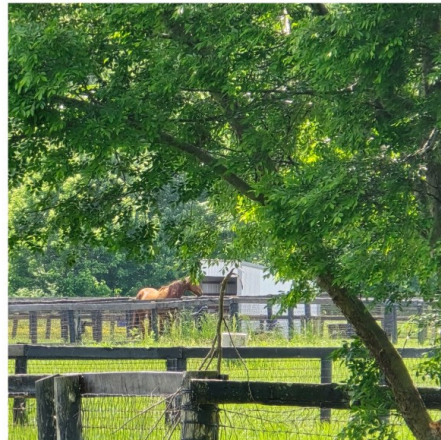
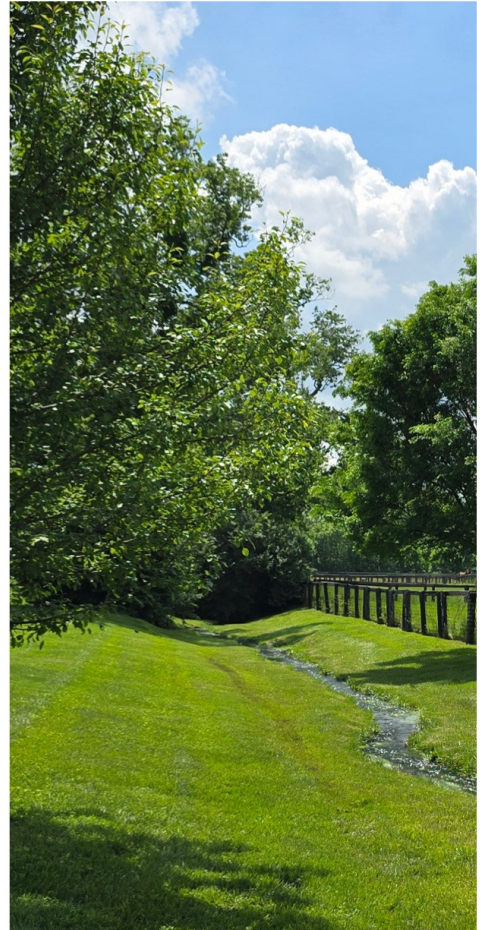
Hey, Desvio, it's official! We'll be here if you ever need us!

Old Friends at Hillcrest Farm

Growth for the Future

In April 2024, Hillcrest Farm became the newest member of the Old Friends family, with the completion of its purchase from the Bluegrass Land Conservancy. The history of the land dates to the 1800's, when two families arrived in Central Kentucky with Thoroughbred horses and a dream. In more recent times, the farm was known as Echo Valley Farm, where two members of Racing's Hall of Fame, Winning Colors and Chris Evert, were foaled. Now known as Old Friends at Hillcrest Farm, we are working with potential partners to create a hybrid community of retired racehorses and select development. We are thrilled to begin this new chapter of creating a safe, secure retirement for more of our Thoroughbred heroes!

Photo © Mary E. Greene



Derby Celebrations

A whirlwind of activity sums it up. Our horses drew an avalanche of support during the days leading up to the Triple Crown Trail. Our Heartfelt Thanks to All!



Resolute Racing's John Stewart created the innovative fundraiser "Poker for Ponies" and disbursed \$200,000 to 20 dedicated Aftercare groups. We were

honored to be among the recipients. Huge thanks to Resolute Racing, John, and all who played for stepping up to support our retired Thoroughbred heroes!



Total Wine Spirits Beer & More 4th Annual "After the Race" Charity Event, was held on April 20 in Lexington. The fundraiser benefitted Old Friends, Our Mims and the Kentucky Equine Adoption Center, and featured an auction, bottle signing, and 13 tastings throughout the store.



The senior resident community of Preston Greens Senior Living in Lexington hand-painted wooden horse models and auctioned them at a special event to benefit Old Friends. We love their creativity!

Blue Jeans Boots & Bulls



On Derby eve, our own John Nicholson served as emcee for the Second Annual Blue Jeans, Boots & Bulls hosted by Barn Door Grill and Lexington Stockyards. Featuring auctions and live music from multiple bands, the event raised over \$18,000 and awareness for beneficiaries Old Friends, Kentucky Children's Hospital and Timbers Grateful Companions.



\$150,000 from the Churchill Downs Foundation
20 Thoroughbred Aftercare Nonprofits
A Winning Combination

The Churchill Downs Foundation stepped up big-time for Thoroughbred Aftercare with Derby Gives: Racing For More. Our retirees were honored to be included in the fun!



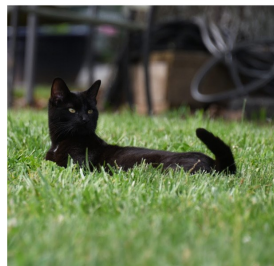
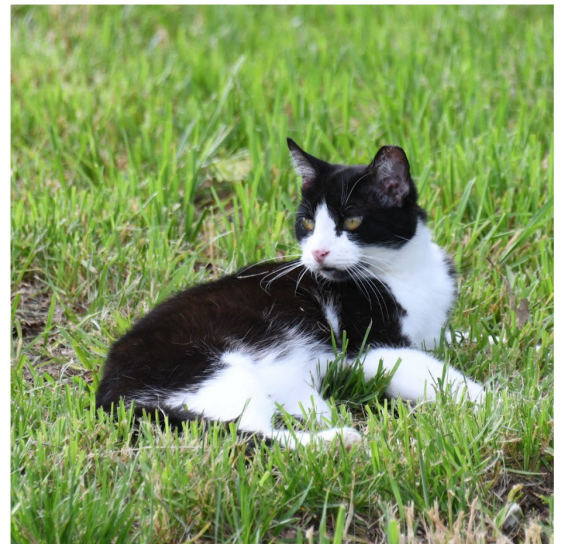
21c Louisville Hotel and Museum held the Derby 150 Brunch & Bet Professional Handicapper event on Oaks Friday. Food, beverage and music along with handicapping bets and tricks galore! A portion of the ticket cost benefited Old Friends!



Ashton Grove Senior Living held a Derby Day party for residents and their families. Spearheaded by Old Friends board member and resident, Bev Passerello, \$3,000 was raised in support of Old Friends retirees.

Greetings from the Farm Felines

Tonto, Pearl, Bebe, Zorro, and Mini-Pearl



Brandothebartender

Jerry Weseloh, Flawless Racing, Owner

Old Friends retiree, Brandothebartender, was named after his breeder's son, Brandon, who was assigned the task of fetching beer during summer days boating on the lake, The nickname "Brandothebartender" stuck, and soon a bay son of Tribal Ruler born in 2013 found himself with a catchy, attention-getting name. Fast-forward to 2022 and we greeted Brando as he stepped off the horse van and into retired life at Old Friends.

After a promising campaign at age four, Brando (the nickname we have all used when referring to him) had not hit the board in his first five races as a five-year-old, which prompted his (then) owners to run him in a claiming race at Del Mar in the summer of 2018. There were six claims (at \$40,000 each) in for him that day. When Craig Dollase (trainer for Flawless Racing, Brian Flanagan and Michael Jarvis) motioned that we won the shake to determine Brando's new owner, we broke out with a very loud cheer! Little did we know at the time what a magical ride he would take us on.

Brando made 29 starts for us over three years, hitting the board in 24 of those races. Along the way we won four stakes, including the California Flag, Crystal Water, Sensational Star and finally, in his very last race, the California Dreaming. Even more impressive was his versatility. He would run on any surface at any racetrack. He won a 1,000-yard sprint on the dirt, and from 5 furlongs to 1 1/16 miles on turf.

During Brando's incredible run we became aware of Old Friends in Kentucky. We wanted Brando to have the best retirement possible and so we reached out in the summer of 2021 prior to Brando's last race. Old Friends gave us the thumbs up that he had a home with them when he was ready to retire.

Little did we know at the time that his last race and impending retirement would come sooner than expected. After an incredible victory in the California Dreaming in front of friends and family, he suffered a minor setback in training. At age eight, Brando owed us nothing and the decision to retire him was unanimous.

Less than a year later my wife Mary and I made our third trip to Old Friends, and first since Brando's arrival. Our first visit with Brando was reserved. He seemed to be acclimating ok, but when Michael took Mary and I to see him he was hesitant to come over and boy did we try. We knew he was receiving incredible care, and we were so grateful to Michael everyone at Old Friends.

This past May my brothers Mike, Ken,

John and I had a planned trip to the PGA Golf Championship in Louisville. We were not going to miss this chance to see Brando, and my brothers were excited to visit Old Friends.

We met Barbara at Old Friends early in the morning and soon enough were on our way to a new paddock where Brando had recently moved with six other horses. This was a different environment for Brando, as his previous paddock only had two other horses. Then something amazing happened. Upon pulling up to the paddock along side a beautiful tree line I immediately saw Brando. I could not believe how good he looked! Unlike that first visit to see Brando this time he immediately came over, and I was convinced he remembered me. My brothers and I spent the next hour pampering Brando with as many carrots as his heart desired, while also making sure to take care of all of his friends.

"It was such a special moment", my brother Mike said, "it was the highlight of the trip". My wife Mary and I have already put a trip on the calendar to return to Old Friends next Spring. We can't wait!



The Weseloh brothers: John (Coors shirt), Mike, Ken, and Jerry, and the one and only Brandothebartender!

Thirty-Somethings



On June 7, we said good-bye to Ide. The flashy 31-year-old chestnut stallion was many things—an accomplished racehorse and sire, standing first at Airdrie Stud in Kentucky, before moving to Clear Creek Stud and becoming a leading sire in Louisiana. Perhaps most notably, Ide was a gentle, sweet horse who excelled at being an ambassador for Thoroughbred Aftercare. For eight years, Ide greeted visitors from his lakefront paddock, joined in 2022 by donkey companion Gorgeous George. Ide was one of a handful of Old Friends retirees who have reached the 30-year milestone. His passing reminds us to honor their exceptional longevity and enjoy the gift of their presence while we can. With admiration and respect, we celebrate these amazing thirty-something Old Friends:

Silver Charm and Touch Gold

In February, Old Friends commemorated the newly-turned-30 duo of Silver Charm and Touch Gold with a Triple Crown Birthday Bash. Over 200 of their fans and close friends celebrated two champions forever entwined in the history books as winners of the 1997 Triple Crown races. Silver Charm, winner of the Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes, arrived at Old Friends in 2014 after completing stud duties in Japan.

Michael Says: The ageless Silver Charm seems immortal.

Remarkably, one year later arch rival, Touch Gold, victor in the Belmont Stakes, was pensioned to Old Friends by Adena Springs in Kentucky. Twenty-seven years after the glory of their Triple Crown season, Silver Charm and Touch Gold spend their retired years on the same farm, within eyesight of each other, delighting legions of fans who come from all over the world to meet and pay homage to these two legends of the Triple Crown.

Michael Says: Touch Gold has the will of a Champion.



Miss DuBois

Missy didn't have much success as a racehorse, but she outdid herself as a broodmare, foaling 11 offspring including the Grade 1-winning multi-millionaire filly, Film Maker. Our senior Old girlFriend at 30, Missy is round and lovely and doesn't look a day over 25. She loves carrots, grooming, and gossip. Not necessarily in that order.

Michael Says: Miss DuBois has nothing in common with her namesake except beauty.

Kayrawan and Intidab

In spring of 2022, Old Friends was honored to retire six stallions, including Kayrawan and Intidab, of the famed Shadwell Farm.

Today at age 32, Kayrawan is our oldest Thoroughbred resident. A son of the legendary stallion, Mr. Prospector, Kayrawan raced in England and the UAE before arriving in the U.S. at age four. He won the Forego (G2) at Belmont Park, and did stud duty at Shadwell in Kentucky and Gallagher's Stud in New York. His back gently swaying with age, Kayrawan has slowed down a step or two, but still has an inquisitive eye and unending enthusiasm for visitors.

Michael Says: Kayrawan is the kindest stallion we've ever retired.

Fellow Shadwell alumni, Intidab (31), raced in the UK and UAE before arriving in the U.S. at age six. He won the True North (G2) and A Phenomenon (G2), both in New York, before heading home to Kentucky for stud duty. Known as a quiet, smart horse, Intidab shows a clear disdain for the shredded carrots that some of our seniors relish. According to photographer Laura Battles, "He prefers thinly sliced carrots for his old man teeth". We give him carrots, his way!

Michael Says: Intidab's independent streak belies his inner friendliness.



Photos © Laura Battles

Little Silver Charm

And let's not forget our farm mascot and official spokeshorse for Georgetown/Scott County Tourism. Somewhere in his mid-thirties (you don't ask a legend how old he is), our little dynamo is the busiest horse on the farm.

Michael Says: There's nothing small about our oldest equine resident.



Club30 *Want to support our terrific thirty-somethings? Club30's annual membership is earmarked in support of our most senior retirees. Donate and receive a set of commemorative cards of each of our thirty-somethings!*



*Through the
camera lenses of
Mary E. Greene
& Laura Battles*

This Gem is Awesome

White Lace

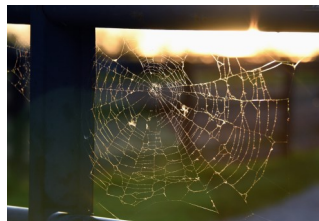
We're Outa Here

Web Wonder

Berry-licious

Paddock 32

Joey and Brando



Old Friends Summer Giving Tree

Give your favorite retiree a gift of:

Food-Healthcare-Wellness

CASHEL CRUSADER FLY MASK NO EARS \$30



PYRANHA FLY SPRAY \$20/\$65

50 LB BAG OF CARROTS \$45

ALFALFA SQUARE BALE \$30

DENTAL VISIT \$75

3M® VETRAP 12 CT BOX \$14.99

ELASTIKON VET TAPE BOX \$70.99

*Thanks to your unfailing generosity,
we know we'll be able to meet the needs
of our more than 280 retirees now and
in the months to come.*

*Today, more than ever you make a
world of difference to their world.*

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 our guides introduce you to our fabulous retirees!



*Laura selfie
with Miss Du Bois*

I love the mares, especially Miss Du Bois, Wicked Sorceress and Gold Round. Who would I like to see retire to Old Friends? Curlin!"

Laura Battles does double-duty at Old Friends, with her fabulous story-telling photos and her extraordinary three-hour marathon **Every Horse on the Farm** tour. There's no better window to Old Friends than having Laura introduce you to, yep, every horse on the farm!

Laura says, "The best part of the EHotF tour is that it's fun, friendly and a chance to just hang out with the horses. Who's my favorite Old Friend?"

The World according to *Little Silver Charm*

When Michael told me he was going to retire I was very happy for him. After all, he's not getting any younger, and I worry about my future.

But it turns out that Michael is only sort of semi-retired.



Photos © Laura Battles

He still gives tours, schmoozes with visitors and brings carrots and Mrs. Pasture's cookies to every horse on the farm. That's 180+ horses, at last count, so it's not exactly a dip in the bucket, so to speak, although that's exactly what it is, in some cases.

Now that Michael doesn't have to spend time in the office making important decisions that involve the future of Old Friends, he has plenty of time to do the things he loves. One of those things is hanging around with Yours Truly. He's been telling anyone who'll listen that he likes to take me on walks around the farm. But who's walking whom? That's what I'd like to know.

I have been trying to explain to Michael that, while he may be retired, I'm not.

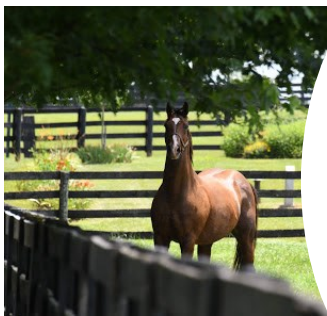


I can't stand around munching grass while he sits in his favorite Adirondack chair by (Big) Silver Charm's paddock and tries to fathom the mysteries of the *Daily Racing Form*. I simply don't have time.

I am still a very busy little horse. I have numerous responsibilities. They don't call me the hardest working horse on the farm for nothing, no matter what some of these stallions may tell you.


My main job here is working with our new arrivals to help them adjust to retirement. I have been very successful, if I say so myself. But while I can claim some expertise in horse retirement, so far I am at a loss trying to teach humans how to retire.

LSC




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 use "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!
\$150 (Gold) \$100 (Silver) \$50 (Bronze)





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/

Old Friends Summer Giving Tree
Choose a gift from our Giving Tree
and give your favorite Old Friend
what they really, really want!




Feed for a Day Calendar
Help cover the daily cost to feed
our retirees. Your text on your
favorite day. Call to discuss.
502-863-1775
\$100 per Date

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



Club 30
Old Friends
Thoroughbred Retirement

Your \$30
Annual Membership
includes a set of
commemorative cards
for each Old Friend
aged 30 and over.

Thank You for Supporting Our Horses!

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

General Use /Where Most Needed Donation \$ _____

Clubhouse Annual Membership (\$150) _____

Hoof Patrol \$250 (Gold) _____ \$125 (Silver) _____ \$50 (Bronze) _____

Old girlFriends Society (\$100) _____

Shares for Life—Horse: _____

Benefits vary based on Level:

\$150 (Gold) _____ (\$100) Silver _____ (\$50) Bronze _____

Little Silver Charm & Gorgeous George (\$25 each)

Friend for All Seasons Monthly Donor (credit card) _____

Indicate amount to be charged monthly \$ _____

Club 30 (\$30) _____

Summer Giving Tree \$ _____ Item _____

\$ _____ Item _____

\$ _____ Item _____

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. EIN 20-0049798

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More information at oldfriendsequine.org/how-to-help/

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.



The back Page

w/Michael



Sometimes it takes decades for a person of limited intelligence and athletic skills to figure out what they do best. I found out fairly quickly that I wasn't good at fixing cars, building houses, playing baseball, cooking and dozens of other occupations that most people take for granted. I couldn't train or retrain a horse or even put bandages on correctly. I marvel at those who can. I could barely pass myself off as a decent hotwalker. But I am very good at adoring all the old friends that have honored us with their presence over the past couple of decades. It's unbelievable that a person of such limited equine and other skills would end up with Silver Charm in his backyard and Summer Attraction, a horse I claimed on Mother's Day in 1999 for \$5,000, in a nearby field. But that's what happened.

And, now, I know what I do best—sit in my marvelous Adirondack chair, re-read Russell Banks and handicap the races. And, listen. Listen to the retirees and the cats and the birds and the bugs and the bees. I can finally hear them. At 77, and in quasi-retirement, I finally figured out what I'm really good at.

2024 TOUR SCHEDULE RESERVATIONS REQUIRED FOR ALL TOURS



GENERAL TOUR

90-Minute Guided Tour · \$30 Per Person
Daily Through November

FOUNDER'S TOUR WITH MICHAEL

90-Minute Tour · \$100 Per Person
Selected Fridays

PRIVATE TOUR

Custom Tour for Groups of 10 and Under
\$75 Per Person/Children Under 11 Free

EVERY HORSE ON THE FARM TOUR

Meet EHotF During This Three-Hour Tour
\$150 Per Person; Selected Sundays

GROUP TOURS

Buses, Tour Companies and Large Groups
\$10-20 Per Person; Based on Group Size

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www.oldfriendsequine.org/visit/