

Seize the Day ...

Carpe Diem Farms News

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Empowering individuals through life changes to see the possibilities and opportunities that abound.



Excitement fills the air at Carpe Diem Farms! As spring began to blossom on the mountain, our reminder of the promise of new life, CDF welcomed two new members of the family. Gracia de Dios (Grace of God) and Battersea Tracy. After our losses in November we have been blessed by the newest additions. Gracia showed up December 14, under the hood of Rafael's car! She must have climbed in the night before and had a 15 mile ride to Carpe Diem! Vet Amy Patterson thought that she was two months old weighing in at two pounds. She immediately took over the house and has provided some much need comic relief! I haven't had a kitten since I was a child. How fun!



Tracy

Tracy came home to Carpe Diem on March 6th. She is a beautiful and spirited two-year-old Morgan filly. I had not set out to find her, she found me! I had been looking at Morgan stallions for breeding, but I kept coming across her picture on various websites. There seemed to be something special about this horse. Later, I learned that Tracy was an orphan foal: her mother had died while giving birth. I went to East West Morgans Blairsville to meet her and learn more about the plight of orphan foals. I had no intention of bringing her home! When I met her, she was in a paddock with nine others. She immediately separated from the others and approached me, followed me out of the paddock and into the barn. She let me know that she was ready for a "forever home." She arrived at Carpe Diem the next day, and was greeted by much fanfare from the herd. She has settled right in and is learning many lessons from the others. The most important lesson she is learning is how to be a horse. Welcome home, Tracy!



Stars Shine Over Carpe Diem!



August 19th

6:00-9:00 PM

Mark your calendars, buy a ticket, and be with us Saturday, August 19th for the 4th annual Be a Star for a Child benefit! Tickets are \$125 per person and support all of the after school and summer camp programs here at the farm. CDF is again going country...casual clothes and dancing shoes are a must! Holly Roberts of "Let Holly Do the Cooking" will be our caterer, providing cocktails, hors 'oeuvres, dinner and dessert. New this year--a seated meal rather than a buffet. Music will be provided by the Bishop Brothers, award winning gospel/country singers and friends of the farm. Come out to tour the farm, meet the horses, check out the new arena, and take a hayride. See you at Dead Eye's Barn!

Rafael Returns to Mexico

People come into our lives for seasons and reasons. They may just cross our paths, stay for a while, or remain for a lifetime. Rafael Hernandez Pena came into our lives at Carpe Diem Farms on June 29, 2004. I don't believe in accidents, and I do believe that God provides; so it was with Rafael. Hired for one day to mow the pastures he stayed—every day for two years and two days. I told everyone that he was Carpe Diem Farm's archangel Rafael—the angel who provides physical and emotional healing. On July 2, I took him to the Atlanta Airport so that he could return to Mexico and his loving family, who had sacrificed much for him to be here, in Highlands. As we pulled into the airport, he said, "One less illegal alien in the US today!" He took off a total of ten days out of 732! Never did he complain, whine, or have a bad day. He greeted each day as a gift from God. Rain, snow, sleet or sun, he worked with a purpose—to make Carpe Diem a beautiful, safe, healing place for the everyone who came to visit, and for me and the animals who call this place home. He was a student and a great teacher. He learned English he learned carpentry skills, he learned to care for and love the animals. Together we completed the construction of The Lodge, which had been started during



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Part One of the “Impossible” Dream Comes True!

Like many projects at Carpe Diem Farms that began as a distant dream, the new indoor riding arena is now a reality! The crew from RAM Development, a division of Lester Barns out of Mooresville, worked overtime to put the finishing touches on this magnificent building. Soaring 25 feet at its highest point, with ten skylights and 3 cupolas, the 8,000 square foot space will beckon visitors to the farm. We spent years fine-tuning our vision of the arena. The end result is a custom-designed space that maximizes the natural light, so that building feels like an extension of the landscape. The arena is the final complement to our equestrian facilities, where working with the land’s natural features has always come first.

The road to the realization of this dream has been winding, and we’ve encountered countless obstacles and dead-ends along the way. The cost of the building seemed to climb faster than we could secure the funds. When the building finally did arrive, there were more setbacks in store, from heavy equipment that could not navigate the winding mountain roads to trusses that needed to be rebuilt on-site. Yet no obstacle could discourage us from fulfilling our mission—to create a space for horses and people to come together, learn, and grow.

The arena—from its inception so many years ago, through the search for funding and finally the complex process of construction—has taught us much about faith, patience, and thinking creatively. This dream come true would not have been possible without the support of generous donors, namely The Janirve Foundation’s \$100,000 grant together with Greg and Amanda Gregory, Ray and Dianne McPhail, Cindy and John McKey, the Hack Family Foundation, a memorial gift for Mack Armstrong and Martin Murry and his Topline Grading Company. We need to continue to raise funds for lighting, bleachers, indoor equipment for the participants, a sprinkler system and maintenance equipment. Please help!

The arena will be formally dedicated at Be A Star. Please join us on August 19 for a tour of the new space!



CDF’s Adopt-A-Horse Program

Seven beautiful equines seek loving adoptive families

Miralces abound at Carpe Diem because of our unique and devoted equine staff--without them there is no program! These amazing creatures help individuals work through fears, overcome physical and emotional limitations, and so much more.

Their care costs \$35,000/year (\$5,380/horse.) Our Adopt-A-Horse program, which covers daily care, farrier, vet bills, food, hay, supplements, vitamins, grooming supplies and training costs, offers a unique opportunity to provide the joy of horsemanship to many. We are looking for individuals or groups to become adoptive families for our horses. Sign up now-- join with others and pay a portion or pay it all, either way, your name or the name of your choice will be posted on “your” horse’s stall as a supporter. By adopting a horse, you will touch not only the lives of these amazing equines, but also every participant who walks through the gate.

Rafael continued

Boot Camp '04. We added three new bedrooms, baths and a shower. We repaired and painted the entire interior. It is a beautiful reflection of his caring ways. This winter we gutted my little house and rebuilt it—sheet rocked, tiled, roofed, painted and so much more. We surprised ourselves with what we accomplished. All the while, he cared for the horses, mucking stalls, composting manure, providing “Promising Results” to local landscapers, a project, which helps to fund Gar’s Kids. He kept the lawns mowed, repaired equipment, helped me keep the facilities clean and greeted everyone who came to the farm with a big smile, extending his hand and saying “I am Rafael!”

He was my veterinary assistant when Little Man, Charlie Brown, and Gracie were so ill. He called all of the animals his friends. He lovingly prepared graves for Asheville, Charlie, and Gracie and made crosses for each of them. His heart was as broken as mine at each of their deaths.

He is a man small of stature, yet he is a giant among men. The horses waited for his little red car to arrive each day, marking time for breakfast. They wouldn’t come into the stables until he pulled in the gate. Now that he is gone, Promise still waits and then reluctantly comes in.

Words can never express the gratitude I feel for having been blessed by his presence. My life, and that that of my four-legged family, is much richer for having known him.

Wish List!

We’re growing, and we need your help! Carpe Diem has a seemingly endless list of equipment and facility needs. For a tax deductible donation, consider donating an item from a some of the following list:

- Washers and dryers--gentle used would be fine!
- Any art supplies for Gar’s Kids and the after school program
- Riding helmets
- A new round pen
- Arena supplies, including lighting, bleachers and a sprinkler system