



Summer 2020

EFF Provides Services through COVID-19

Equines For Freedom therapists have offered all clients Tele-health and limited equine therapy during the time of the pandemic. Please know that we are still accepting veterans and hope to meet the needs of first responders after this pandemic is over. Please call (570) 665-2483 for more information.



Gun Raffle Slated for September 26th

Mark your calendars for a new fundraiser! EFF will be hosting an afternoon of fun, food, drinks, arena tours, and a gun raffle on **Saturday, September 26, 2020, 3 – 8 PM**. The event will be held at the pavillion at Marley's Mission, with an Open House and tours of the EFF arena starting at 2 PM. For just \$30, guests will be treated to food, beer/soda, and a ticket for the raffle. For more information on tickets and a list of prizes and guns available to win, keep on eye on our Facebook page (@EquinesForFreedom) and website (www.equinesforfreedom.org)!



Mission Accomplished for This Veteran

Written by Lori Bishop

I recently had the opportunity and privilege to speak with a Veteran who found success with his Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, with the assistance of Equines For Freedom. This kind, brave, and very forthcoming Patriot desired to remain anonymous. I spoke with him via phone and asked him the following questions.

Can you tell me about your time in the Military?

I was in the Army National Guard for 22 years. I was a Gunner. I was deployed during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Guard or Reserves is hard. You have to be good at two jobs - your civilian job and your Military job. Lots of stress.

When did you realize that you needed help for your PTSD?

My anger was bad - I had a very low flashpoint. I went to the VA and that was going nowhere. All they wanted to do was throw medicine at me. I was tired of taking these bad drugs that were only masking my PTSD. I stopped the meds and just tried to deal with it.

How did you learn about Equines For Freedom?

My wife heard about it.

What was going through your mind during your first appointment at Equines For Freedom?

I was skeptical but curious. I was at an open house and a Veteran spoke about going through the program. I had been going through counseling at the Vet Center - talking was good to a point.

How long did it take before you saw or felt improvement (once you began the program)?

It was after the third appointment that I started seeing a difference. I went every weekend in the beginning, then every two weeks. My treatment program lasted for nine months. I stuck with it.

What advice would you give to a Veteran or first responder who has PTSD?

I highly recommend Equines For Freedom. You only get out of it what you put into it. Keep an open mind. When you go through a program, it's not like going to a psych doctor, You can't lie- the horse will blow the whistle on you. The horse can read you. It really forces you to learn. The horse is a mirror image of what you're going through. EFF is an alternative to putting chemicals (prescriptions) in your body.



President's Letter

Written by Bruce Spencer



I was reminded recently to re-read Scroll VII in *The Greatest Salesman in the World*. The author writes that there are four words that can carry us through adversity and maintain a life in balance... "This too shall pass."

As my first letter as board president of Equines for Freedom, I had been struggling on what to say. "This too shall pass" is a perfect theme.

Before sitting down to write, I took a walk on a warm spring day. I passed by a man who appeared down and out. He asked me, not surprisingly, if I could spare a couple of bucks for a cup of coffee. I gave him a \$20 dollar bill. You see, I believe in the adage, "The more you give, the more you shall receive."

COVID-19 has taken a toll on Equines for Freedom... especially on our therapy team's ability to meet and treat our clients with Post Traumatic Stress. We have been forced to cancel two of our major fundraisers. Between both, we would have generated almost half of the funds we need for operations through May 2021. So my friend, if you are reading this, you must know we treat veterans and first responders with Post Traumatic Stress at absolutely no charge. This is a very challenging time for first responders also, and we expect an increase in those requesting our help in the very near future.

I know this is a trying time for all of us. I am asking you open your heart, and share what you are financially able to, so that Equines For Freedom can continue to treat our veterans and first responders who are desperately in need of our help. Your donation can be mailed to Equines for Freedom, PO Box 53, Factoryville, Pa 18411. No amount is too small. You can also donate via credit or debit card at www.EquinesforFreedom.org.

May you and your families be safe and healthy during this challenging time. This too shall pass.

Warmly,

Bruce J. Spencer – president

US Navy Veteran -- 1967 to 1971

Thank You!

Written by Sylvia Tagert, Board Secretary

Volunteers are the backbone of a successful non-profit organization. It takes volunteers, lots and lots of volunteers. To date, family, friends old and young now number in the dozens of people and thousands of hours logged. That is quite an accomplishment and a tribute to all who have helped with running our organization and hosting fundraisers this year. We could not have had this success without you.

Engaging people to believe in our cause has become a passion and this effort is remarkably rewarding... after all we have a great track record. Meeting people who want to help be part of the solution is ever growing in scope and numbers. Fundraising is a duty and a privilege and we are thrilled to have amassed an amazing group of supporters who believe that helping veterans, first responders and caregivers is important. Those who serve/ have served us should be our priority. The wonder in the eyes of middle school and high school aged children when we thank them in person for their fundraising efforts is truly amazing. The adults who have educated these children about the sacrifices

that those in service to their country have made has inspired a new generation to serve. To the many who have helped and supported EFF, we are eternally grateful.

The members of our Board of Directors are not paid, constantly donating many hours to make this effort successful, and made up a diverse group of people who care. Most of them are still working full time but continue to find time to devote to this effort. This venture has been a journey of educating the public, spreading the word by doing media interviews, publishing articles, and just doing what needs to be done to build a foundation of support with a purpose.

In summary, we encourage those who are not familiar with our program to visit our website at www.equinesforfreedom.org or our Facebook page @Equines For Freedom. We have history, results and many who can attest to having gone on to lead happier and more productive lives. The testimonials are so inspiring. Thank you for joining our community, just thank you. If you know someone who would like to volunteer, we would love to have them! Please direct them to our website and click the "Volunteer" tab.



Cassandra Bell Recognized

Equines For Freedom would like to recognize Cassandra Bell for her dedicated service to the EFF Board of Directors. Cass put in countless hours in the role as EFF Treasurer since 2017. We thank her for everything she has done for Equines for Freedom and wish her well!

We Need Your Email!

We are very excited to share our new Equines for Freedom newsletter with you and hope you find it informative and enjoyable to read. We could really use your help though! Mailing newsletters costs money – money that we would rather spend on helping the EFF program going and growing. Therefore, we are moving to an electronic format (meaning we will be emailing future additions, as well as posting on our website).

If you would kindly share your email address with us, we would be happy to email our quarterly newsletters to you! Please call us at 570-665-2483 or email us at eff@equinesforfreedom.org to share your email. Thank you!!!



★ ★ ★ Signature Events Canceled ★ ★ ★

We are so sad to report that three of our fundraisers had been cancelled, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Sporting Clays Shoot (May), Wine Festival (June), and Golf Tournament (August) have been a significant source of revenue for EFF since our inception. The funds raised from these wonderful events have made it possible for us to continue to offer equine assisted Post Traumatic Stress Disorder therapy at no charge to veterans and first responders.

Though we have had to adjust our treatment protocols because of social distancing, we have continued to offer therapy during this pandemic. Accordingly, although our revenues have taken a real hit, our therapy expenses have continued. If you have been an individual or corporate supporter of our Clay Shoot, Wine Festival, or Golf Tournament, would you consider donating in lieu of your participation in these events in 2020? We would certainly appreciate your continued support. We look forward to seeing you at these events in the Spring of 2021.

EFF Gets a New Tagline!

When our original tagline, 'Horses Helping Veterans Heal' was created, it was in direct referral to our then mission statement. As EFF has grown to include first responders, it was clear that the logo would need tweaking, since the mission statement was revised to include that "new" group.

Our new tagline, "Horses Helping Healing" still reflects the original goal, but now includes both group sets being treated. We have also included Caregivers on a limited basis and hope to grow this group in the near future. We hope you like our new "look!"



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