

HORSE HAPPENINGS

Moonlight Ranch Newsletter

Kate Ford, LICSW and Lauren Petrilli, LICSW



Summer in Full Bloom!

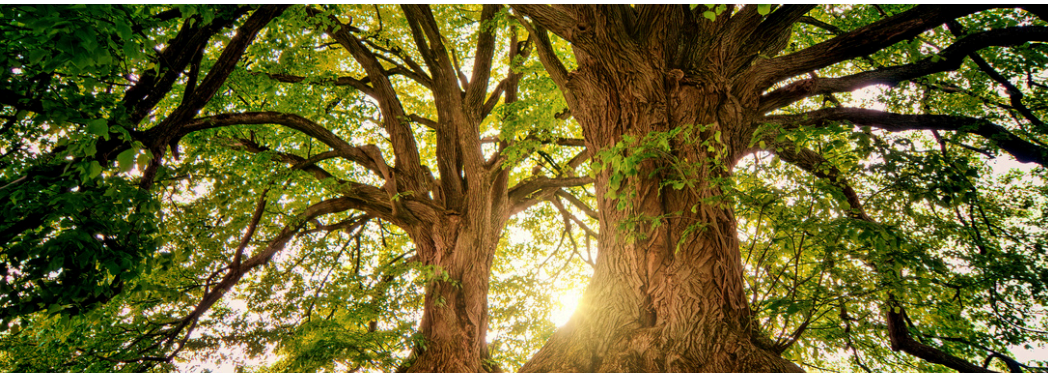
WHO IS AT THE FARM?

Moonlight Ranch is home to a family of humans, a herd of horses, a drove of mini-donkeys, a trip of goats, a fluffle of rabbits, a flock of chickens, and flora and fauna both native and invasive to the land.

Summer invites us to slow down and notice sweet floral fragrances, earthy soil scents, hot sunshine, swaying trees in warm breezes, melodious bird song, buzzing insects and foraging bees, swishing tails while horses munch on grass and plants. Summer is a time to pay more attention to our physical needs of rest and hydration. At the farm, it is important we attend to the needs of the animals during the hot summer months, making sure there is enough access to clean water, shade, and relief from insects to ensure their comfort.

Summer is a beautiful time to be at the farm, as our Provider Retreats and Consultation Groups continue. We are excited to have you join us!

For more information about our events and offerings, follow this link to [learn more here!](#)



Spaces Still Available! Join Us at an Upcoming Event:

Provider Retreats 2025

AUGUST 24 10-1PM

OCTOBER 19 10-1PM

Group Consultation

SUNDAY AUGUST 24
1:30-3PM

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Acknowledging the Land in a Land Acknowledgment

What does it mean to acknowledge the land? I believe it means recognizing that the land is alive. That it has its own memories and histories, dreamings and imaginings, much of which we know nothing about. It reminds us there have been many feet (hooves, paws, claws, etc) upon this patch of earth before we ever set foot upon it, linking many lives and experiences throughout time. I believe it means imagining the perspectives of a tree, a rock, a worm, a horse, relating to the land and its inhabitants as fellow spirit-full beings deserving of wonder, compassion, and respect. I believe it means remembering that we are in relationship with the other than, more than human world at all times, yet can learn to be more intentional about it. I wrote this acknowledgement of the land to include the beings who are present now, and to recognize those who suffered and survived alongside the indigenous people and their relationship to the land, as it was and as it is now. This helps to guide our Tea Time with the Equines Group Consultation Experience as well, with intentions to orient our minds and hearts across space and time, before we go out to the paddock, and ask permission to learn from encounters with the other than human beings here at the farm. ~LP

I am grateful to work alongside Lauren, who created this Land Acknowledgement. We had several discussions and a shared focus to step into this process with sensitivity and clarity of purpose, rather than checking off a box. This is one step to acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of these lands and their descendants, both past and present.

Next steps include supporting Indigenous organizations to meet the needs of Indigenous people today. Along those lines, we are grateful for resources that guided this process. [“Native Governance Center: Beyond Land Acknowledgements: A Guide.”](#)

As well as a local Massachusetts organization we support: [Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness.](#) -KF

“Let us acknowledge that this land is home, to the horses, plants, and many other creatures here, and we respect it as their home, that both animals and land have much history, stories, and wisdom, that this land may remember and know itself as part of the Pennacook people's land, with legacies of suffering and survival, known and unknown, recognizing the generations of indigenous people who are stewards of this land, and all the ways the land may hold memories. Let us remember to ask permission to learn, from any encounter we may have with the other beings here, knowing how meaningful a simple question, expression of gratitude, and acknowledgement of another being can be, when we are sharing time and space with one another.”



ATTENDEE REFLECTIONS:

"I had the honor of attending a provider retreat at the ranch and had an incredibly restorative, enlightening, and meaningful experience. I learned a lot about horses, farming, equine-assisted therapy, and the experience affirmed some things I'm working on in my own life. Now I know firsthand what I'm talking about when referring someone to equine-assisted therapy! It was truly an unforgettable and unique experience that I will never forget. I felt safe the entire time, even when we were directly with the animals. I found the facilitators, Kate and Lauren, to be so grounded and kind, and highly attuned to the participants and animals; they made sure we all felt informed, comfortable, and had what we needed. I'm also grateful to have also connected with several other wonderful clinicians I can add to my referral network!"

- Shelby Dwyer, LMHC



"It is hard to capture the spirit of this retreat without using the word "magic." It was a truly glorious day! Kate and Lauren were warm, inviting and thoughtful facilitators. They encouraged us to take and hold whatever we needed that day. The experience was reflective, open, gently challenging, playful, and nourishing. With each experience with a horse - or mini donkey! - different emotions arose. It felt effortless to be present and look within while soaking in the surroundings of the animals, nature, and people. I am so grateful for this experience and hope to attend in the future!"

-Molly, LICSW

MOMENTS WITH THE HERD

