

The role of tour guide at Sanctuary One: Telling stories of success on nature's stage

BY JILL TOWNSLEY

"Welcome to Sanctuary One at Double Oak Farm. My name is Jill, and I will be your tour guide." So begin the lines to a script that hold more weight than any words I recited on a theatrical stage. Prior to each tour, I get the same jitters in my stomach I once experienced as an amateur theater actor. But the nervous feelings now stem from a desire to adequately convey to my audience the powerful message of healing, community, and sustainability that is inherent in the mission of the farm.

Luckily, this is no one-woman show. I am joined by a glorious band of characters on this pastoral stage, each with a compelling true story to tell of heart-warming healing.

But I am getting ahead of myself. As your tour guide, I first introduce you to the farm itself. Back in the mid-1800s, it was a 55-acre cattle ranch in the heart of the Applegate Valley. In 2007, local philanthropist Lloyd Matthew Haines purchased and repurposed the land according to his vision of a nonprofit care farm. As such, Sanctuary One made its public debut in 2008.

So with that prologue aside, the stage is now set for the dramatic entry of our furry cast. Sanctuary One specializes in the rehabilitation and re-homing of abused and neglected animals whose personal tales would otherwise end tragically. Enter stage left...curious Comet. Comet is a four-

year-old mustang mare, brought to us by Strawberry Mountain Mustang Rescue in Roseburg, Oregon. As a newborn foal, cord still attached, she was a castaway of a reservation roundup, tagged for auction with little hope for survival. Luckily, we successfully found a wonderful home for her, but as fate would have it, her loving owner passed away. Not to worry. As is our policy, our gates always swing both ways in the event that an adoption does not proceed as expected. Comet is flourishing here and awaiting an opportunity to enrich the life of another human caretaker.

Now meet Holly, a four-month-old calf and burgeoning star at the farm. When only days old, she was found abandoned in the trunk of a car. Rescued by an animal control agency in California, she was then transferred to a dairy farm as a temporary foster home. Unfortunately, she contracted salmonella. Farm Sanctuary in Orland, California, then assumed her care, and after weeks in isolation she received a clean bill of health and was finally able to join our lively troupe. Now she is thriving and has even bonded with one of our adult cows, Cookies.

But the tour stories are not limited to our large animal companions. As part of your tour, we will also visit the dog, cat, rabbit, chicken and newly completed FIV (feline immunodeficiency virus) cat habitats. One energetic member



Armadillo Technical Institute youth with Holly, a four-month-old calf found abandoned in the trunk of a car and now thriving at Sanctuary One.

of our canine ensemble who will catch your eye is Gabe, a five-year-old miniature poodle who came to us from the Southern Oregon Humane Society (SOHS). As part of their Saving Train campaign, Gabe was rescued from a Las Vegas shelter where he was likely to be euthanized. Although highly adoptable, Gabe was incredibly stressed at SOHS, ripping out one of his toenails when scratching at his cage door. With our cage-free and highly enriching environment, Gabe has truly blossomed since coming to Sanctuary One. Now it is just a matter of finding that perfect forever-home for Gabe that will complete his success story.

These anecdotes are just a few of the tales you may hear when visiting

the sanctuary. In addition, you will directly experience the beauty of the farm's natural set design. With tour season now in full swing, the landscape will be bustling with freshly grown produce, beautiful perennials, and nature's own improvisations under the forest canopy.

The "curtain" opened on our tour season on Saturday, April 25. Public tours are by reservation only on Wednesdays and Saturdays at 10:30 am. Tours last about 90 minutes with an admission fee of \$10 per person. Reservations can be made by calling the farm at 541-899-8627 or emailing info@sanctuaryone.org.

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The new William Driscoll and Alicia Theophil FIV Cat Cottage at Sanctuary One formally opened on Friday, April 24, with over 40 people attending, including the Driscoll family and many animal welfare advocates and leaders. The new Cat Cottage addition is complete with indoor and outdoor access, an intake/isolation area, and furnishings including chairs for visitors.

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