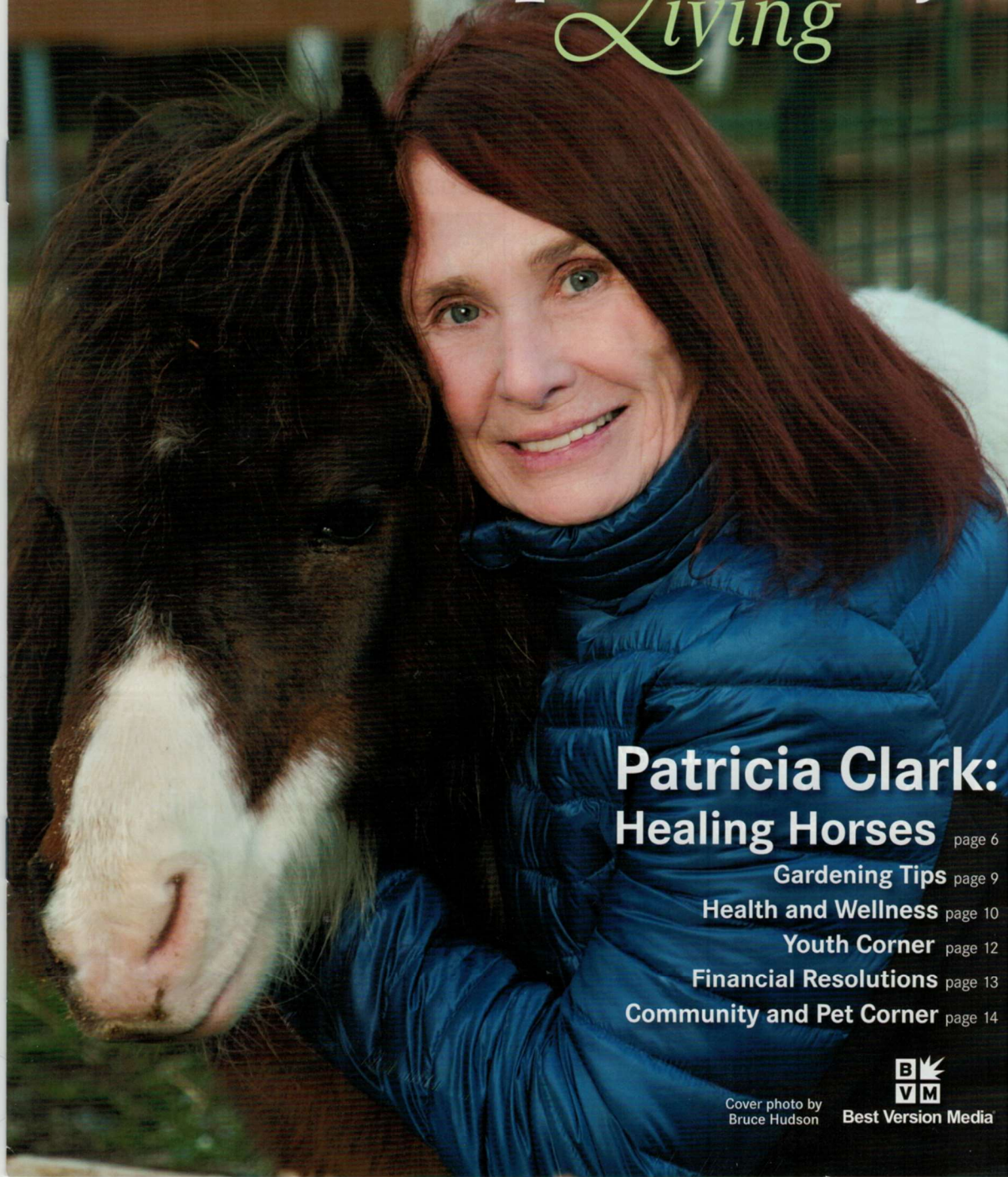


North Maple Valley *Living*

JANUARY 2018



Patricia Clark: Healing Horses

page 6

Gardening Tips page 9

Health and Wellness page 10

Youth Corner page 12

Financial Resolutions page 13

Community and Pet Corner page 14

Cover photo by
Bruce Hudson



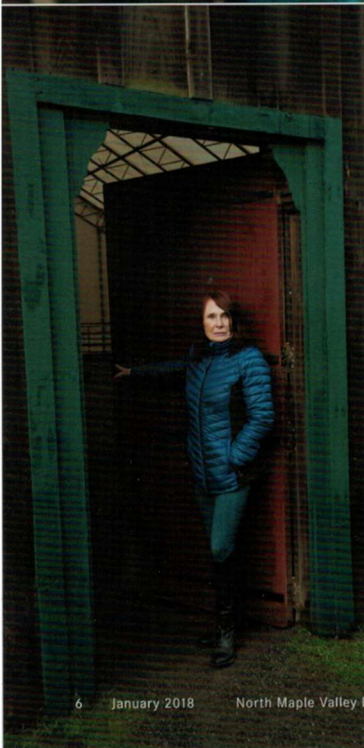
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Resident Feature

Patricia Clark: *Healing Horses*



Photos by Bruce Hudson



By Charise Rohrbach

The ten-acre farm on a dead-end street on the east side of Hobart-Issaquah Road in Maple Valley is lined with trees, serene and peaceful. It is apropos for this place to be called Serenity Equine Rescue and Rehabilitation. Here, the forgotten, mainly horses who are abused and neglected, find a new life and fortune as they are rescued, rehabilitated, then placed in loving homes by a compassionate woman by the name of Patricia Clark.

Patricia, is a spitfire redhead about five feet tall, who is not afraid of getting down and dirty on the farm, driving tractor, hauling hay, mending and jumping over fences, and doing the typical laborious farmhand work on a daily basis. But most of all, her heart is in her mission. That mission is to rescue horses in peril, and to give them a chance at a wonderful life! Patricia, an accomplished horse woman, has lived on her farm for many years with her family of many animals. With a Master in Public Administration and a Certificate of Livestock Management from Western State University (plus 30 years of teaching in Higher Education), she could have followed her plan of investing in and running a premiere boarding and training facility as retirement approached. However, one event prompted her to change her plans.

An 11-acre equestrian center in Auburn that was calling itself a "rescue", had 93 malnourished, sick, and neglected horses. It was run by a woman named Dean Solomon. Though Animal Control had been contacted for years, nothing had been done. Patricia, with her heart breaking for these horses, went



Resident Feature

"under cover" as a volunteer at the center and while there, took pictures and documented the cruelty that was taking place. She then made an appointment with County Counsel member Dow Constantine's office and presented her documentation. The next day, Animal Control was there, 23 horses were removed and taken to Patricia's new stable, and charges were filed (Solomon was charged with 1st degree cruelty and the center was shut down). Over a two-week period, 34 horses came to her farm. One of those horses was Copper, a thoroughbred horse who was malnourished, 250 pounds underweight, and in dire straits. Within six months, Copper was fully rehabbed, beautiful and healthy. There were no stalls left for boarders, so Patricia decided to donate her property to the horses and Serenity Equine Rescue and Rehabilitation was born.

Patricia has thrown her heart, soul, and selflessness into creating and running this wonderful rehabilitation center for forgotten horses needing love, care, and life. Since she rescues horses in lacking conditions, some of the stories that go along with them can be straight out of an action movie. Horses named Harley and Radish, who currently live at Serenity, came from a meth house here in Maple Valley. The owner didn't provide feed or water for them, spending their money on drugs instead. Neighbors called and reported this mistreatment repeatedly for over a year, but nothing was done by Animal Control. The neighbors next door called Patricia to alert her of the situation. Patricia did a welfare check, talked to the owner, and realized immediately that nothing was going to change. That day, she delivered hay to the neighbor's house, cleaned and filled the water trough, and made it possible for the horses to be fed and watered from the neighbor's property. About a month later while Patricia was still trying to convince the owner to give up the horses, they decided to cook meth and the house exploded in a fiery blaze! Patricia arrived the next morning to find Harley and Radish huddled together in the back of the property. After working with family to obtain a Power of Attorney, Patricia was able to get a Release of Ownership and Harley and Radish were rescued. They now have a second chance, and



currently receive the love and care they were living without for so long.

Serenity rescues mainly horses, but also the occasional pig or dog. The newest two members of Patricia's family are Riley and Precious, a rescued pig and dog who quickly acclimated to life on the farm. Serenity is still working with a 29-year-old beloved mini named Little D, who weighed in at only 100 pounds when he was brought in, but presently weighs a healthy 205 pounds!

People often call Patricia when they have problems caring for their horses, whether it's due to finances or the horse being sick and owners not knowing what to do. Some other calls are people reporting horses they see in peril. Patricia does welfare checks on the horses, provides veterinarian care if needed, farrier care, and in the extreme situation, humane euthanasia if required. "My goal is to keep the horse with their family that loves it if at all possible", says Patricia. "This is a win-win for both the horse and the owner and leaves a space open for a horse that may not have a family that can continue to care for it once they are through the crisis".

Patricia lives at Serenity Equine Rescue and Rehabilitation with her current family of 23 horses, two pigs, and one dog. The farm is surrounded by other parcels of five to ten acres, many of them small family farms, and there is a quietness and peacefulness enjoyed by every neighbor as well as the horses. As a member of Professional Humane Educators (and a Reiki Master), she has also created an Education Center on-site which hosts equine wellness clinics by local well-known veterinarians, chiropractors and massage therapists; and horsemanship clinics to teach horse owners the information they need to better understand and care for their animals.



Serenity Equine Rescue and Rehabilitation is run and survives only on donations. Volunteers pitch in wherever they can and most of its current volunteers will tell you that their volunteer time with the horses is very therapeutic and healing for them! Serenity was nominated for Maple Valley 2016 non-profit of the year, and has been awarded a prestigious non-profit award from Great Non-Profits every year for the past 10 years! If you would like to become a volunteer or donate in any way, email volunteer@serenityequinerescue.com or go to www.serenityequinerescue.com.

Do you know a neighbor who has a story to share?

Nominate your neighbor to be featured in one of our upcoming issues!

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