

Winter 2023

# FriendsNews

*Friends of Deer Hollow Farm is a non-profit organization supporting Deer Hollow Farm and its educational programs.*



## Farm and Garden Field Trip

*By Jaime Villarreal*



**F**irst-grade students from Ocean Shore School recently explored the Farm and Garden class at Deer Hollow Farm, a journey into early settler life.

Arriving at the farm, students walked or took school buses directly to the location. They learned how homesteaders provided sustenance like meat, milk, and more.

In groups of eleven, guided by staff or volunteers, they explored the farm, discovering historic equipment like an old tractor and experiencing farm life. They even got hands-on with sheep, rabbits, goats, chickens and ducks.

Afterward, students washed their hands behind the Blacksmith shed and enjoyed lunch in the Hay Barn.

Farm field trips, with learning activities like those described above, take place during the school year from October to May, with registration through the City of Mountain View. Friends of Deer Hollow Farm provide bus transportation scholarships for the field trips that are funded by grants and donations.





# Farm Updates

## Friends Collaborate with Midpen on Summer Outreach Events

by Lubab Sheet-Davis

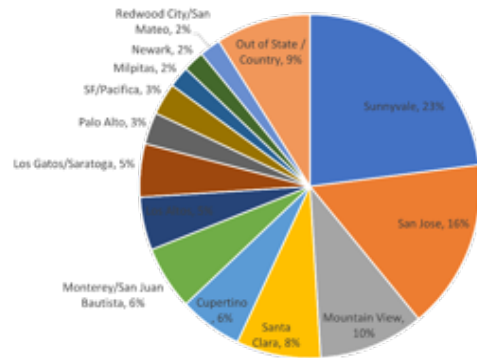
**F**riends of Deer Hollow Farm (FODHF) or 'Friends' board members in collaboration with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space (Midpen) staff hosted three outreach events at Deer Hollow Farm this summer on June 23, July 15 and August 6, to educate visitors about the farm, the role of FODHF as well as sustainable alternatives to rodenticides.



Spearheaded by longtime advocate, volunteer and board member Jaime Villarreal, the events engaged more than 200 visitors to Rancho San Antonio Open Space, one-third of whom were first time visitors or not familiar with Deer Hollow Farm. Information was shared on the history of Deer Hollow Farm, the educational programs, funding sources and upcoming events to support the farm as well as how to learn more.

The majority of the visitors were from across the bay area as shown in the chart, and a few were from out of state and even Japan.

Visitor Demographics from Summer 2023 Outreach Events



In addition to learning more about Deer Hollow Farm, visitors had the opportunity to engage with knowledgeable staff from Midpeninsula Regional Open Space about sustainable alternatives to rodenticides and many other topics. Owl boxes were highlighted as a great alternative to manage rodents, and only require a tall tree or post. The use of owls prevents poisoning of domestic animals and wildlife.

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space and Friends of Deer Hollow Farm, along with the City of Mountain View, collectively provide funding for Deer Hollow Farm, allowing it to remain a free resource for the Bay Area and beyond.

Thank you to everyone who stopped by!



Sherilyn Reinhart of Midpen



Hima Tammineni of Midpen



Kids enjoyed playing with the farm animal toys while parents learned more about Friends of Deer Hollow Farm and Midpen.

# Farm Updates

## Spooky Times Spectacular

by Tara Sreekrishnan

The Farm was transformed into a festive Halloween haven, with spooky decorations, haunted barns, and visitors of all ages in costume. We're delighted to share that we had another successful Spooky Times event, raising valuable funds to care for the farm animals. Thank you to everyone who joined in the fun!





# Farm Updates

## Meet Deer Hollow Farm's Growing Team

by Jaime Villarreal

**T**his August, Deer Hollow Farm welcomed three new hourly staff to assist with farm operations and programming. The two new Lead Teachers, Emma Enssel and Kimberly Farrell, have begun assisting with all aspects of the School Year Program. From leading classes, to organizing teaching materials and helping to train new docents, Emma and Kim will be busy providing amazing educational, hands-on experiences for the 4,500 elementary students that are expected to visit the Farm this school year.



Kimberly Farrell



Emma Enssel

The Farm is thrilled to have them both onboard and we are looking forward to what we can accomplish with additional School Year programming staff!

The third newest hourly farm staff is Robin Blumenstein. They can be found helping in the barnyard during the weekends. Robin first became familiar with the Farm as a cross country runner when they were attending their first year of Mountain View High School. Soon after, they became a DHF summer camp intern

and loved assisting leading young campers in activities around the Farm. After completing their education at Bowdoin College in Maine, Robin returned to the area and eventually reconnected with the place that would enable them to work outdoors and with animals.



Robin Blumenstein

Robin enjoys meeting farm visitors and sharing information about the animals, helping care for the livestock and being able to work in what they call their "happy place."

## Fun Facts Bird Brain?

### Chickens are Smarter Than You May Think!!

by Nancy Stuhr

**D**id you know that there is a lot more to chickens than you may expect? Scientists have found that chickens have at least 30 "words" in their vocabulary, and this does not include the peeping that they use to communicate to their chicks while they are still inside the egg! If you were given a chance to listen, you could hear the chicks answer their mothers as well.

Chickens can also recognize at least 100 faces, and these include human faces. So yes, your chickens do recognize you - it's not just the food!

According to an article in the Scientific American (Smith & Zielinski, May 2017) when making decisions, the chicken takes into account its own prior experience and knowledge surrounding the situation. It can solve complex problems, use the strategy of risk compensation, and empathize with individuals that are in danger.

A 1990's study showed the chickens' calls are "functionally referential," as behaviorists would say - meaning that they refer to specific objects and events broadly in the way that words used by people do. Scientists found that chickens do think before they act using environmental clues and the information relayed by other flock members. (Smith & Zielinski, 2017)

So next time someone calls you a "bird brain", you can consider it a compliment, and say "thank you"!



# Farm Updates

## Ask the Animals

by Jaime Villarreal



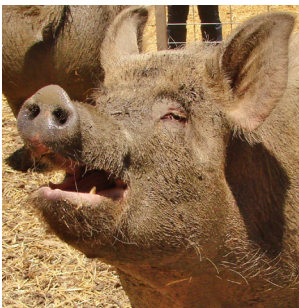
**Cow.** Why were you staring at the arriving volunteer?

“When I see a familiar human I know, it’s going to be feeding time soon. It also feels comforting like when I’m together with my fellow cow buddy.”



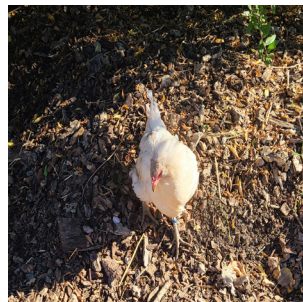
**Duck.** Why were you looking up at the sky?

“The other day I saw a hawk flying nearby. Good thing Ryan, our gander scared it away. I’m happy we have geese here to protect us.”



**Pig.** Why were you in the mud the other day?

“It was hot. It feels relaxing to be in the mud. It cools me down and it keeps bugs off of me. It feels like a Calistoga mud bath treatment.”



**Chicken.** I was worried when you weren’t in the chicken yard.

“I like to forage and explore outside my pen. I know it’s not safe, but at the end of the day I go back inside.”



**Sheep.** Why is your wool greasy?

“I don’t know, but when it rained the other day, I didn’t feel wet or cold. Once one visitor was rubbing her hands after touching my wool talking about free lanolin.”



**Rabbit.** Why are you so cute?

“I think it’s because of my large expressive eyes, my blissfully soft fur, my wonderful long ears and my youthful playful behavior. I might like the attention, but I also just like to relax and dig.”



**Goat.** Why were you trying to eat a cell phone?

“I’m curious about a lot of things. It’s the best way to find out what something is and if it’s edible. After I bit it, I heard what sounded like “Hello, Hello?” I’m so sorry about the bite marks.”



**Cat.** I was looking for you but I didn’t see you. Were you ok?

“It’s because I needed some alone time. Sometimes I want attention and feel needed. When people pet me, I feel like I’m doing something for them, then I get tired of that after a few hours and go to my hiding place.”

# Will You 'Become a Friend'?

by Lubab Sheet-Davis

If you are reading this newsletter, it is probably safe to assume that Deer Hollow Farm holds a special place in your heart. Did you come to the farm as a child or do your children participate in our camps and classes? Are you one of our amazing volunteers or docents? Or, do you just admire the farm as part of your walks at Rancho San Antonio? There are many aspects of Deer Hollow Farm that are special; the location and history, the accessibility to all members of our community, and of course the animals that are such an essential part of the experiential educational programs. The animals bring joy and create memorable experiences to countless visitors to the farm. And they remind both kids and adults alike of our reliance on animals for some types of food and more as well as the importance of taking care of the environment. That is why our 2023 "Become a Friend" fundraising campaign is focused on raising money for the animal fund which is dedicated to our beloved animals of Deer Hollow Farm.

You might be surprised to learn that the animals cost approximately \$45,000 per year or \$125 per day, including acquisition of new animals, vet care, feed and bedding. These costs have almost doubled over the past five years, with a bale of alfalfa now costing ~\$30, up from \$20 just a few years ago. Deer Hollow Farm has approximately 100 animals throughout the year, with of course, the Springtime being the peak with many lambs and kids.



Bella, Peaches & Mango need \$50/month

Our soft and fluffy rabbits, Peaches, Mango and Bella, cost \$12 a week or about \$50 a month. You'll often find chickens, which cost \$90 a week, mingling with the ducks and geese, which cost \$35 a week. The eggs from our chickens are sold on Tuesdays and Fridays for \$8 per dozen in the spring and summer and generally go fast. Some say the green ones taste the best!

Our wonderful pigs, George and Martha, who are always by one another's sides, cost \$30 a week, so clearly costs are not a function of animal size. Our herd of goats saw a lot of change this year and cost \$175 per week.

The Sheep flock and our sweet Cows, Jellybean and Henrietta, each cost \$250 per week.

And don't forget our cats, including Sprite, who may not cost a lot but serve as a welcome committee, keep an eye on mice and remind all of us how to relax.

We hope you'll "Become a Friend" by making a donation to Friends of Deer Hollow Farm as part of your year-end giving. Our goal is to raise \$45,000 for the Animal Fund to cover the animal costs for the year by January 31, 2024. Friends of Deer Hollow Farm provides 100% of the funding for the animals, and we are only able to do so because of your generosity. We'd love to know your favorite animals when you send your donations in the envelope provided with the newsletter. Or you can donate online at [www.deerhollowfarmfriends.org](http://www.deerhollowfarmfriends.org) and select Animal Fund. You can also note in the comment box your favorite animal friends. There is also an opportunity to make donations in honor of a friend or family member's special occasion, and donations on behalf of others are a wonderful gift. When you make your donation this way, the recipient will receive a lovely card acknowledging the gift.

We will highlight all donors at the \$500 or above level at the farm on a banner in 2024, donors at the \$250 or more level will receive a small animal ornament as part of the thank you and all donors will be acknowledged in our Summer 2024 Newsletter. Donations are tax deductible and will receive a donation acknowledgement for tax purposes.

Whether a long-time donor or first-time donor, we are grateful for your generous support! We wish you and yours a joyful holiday season and peaceful and prosperous New Year. And we look forward to seeing you at the farm soon. Thank you!



And don't forget our cats, including Sprite!



# Will You 'Become a Friend'?

## Feeding Cost Summary

<i>Animals</i>	<i>Week</i>	<i>Month</i>	<i>1 year</i>
Rabbits	\$ 12	\$ 48	\$ 576
Pigs: George & Martha	\$ 30	\$ 120	\$ 1,440
Ducks & Geese	\$ 35	\$ 140	\$ 1,680
Chicken Flock	\$ 90	\$ 360	\$ 4,320
Goat Herd	\$ 175	\$ 700	\$ 8,400
Sheep Flock	\$ 250	\$ 1,000	\$ 12,000
Cows: Henrietta & Jelly Bean	\$ 250	\$ 1,000	\$ 12,000



Henrietta & Jellybean need \$250/week or \$1,000/month



Chickens need \$360/month



Ducks & Geese, including Athena, Lucy & Ryan need \$140/month



Our herd of goats, including Angel, Trudy, Pippin, Mary & Poppy, need \$175/week or \$700/month



Our flock of sheep, including Bowie, Mint, Clover, Purl and Knit, need \$250/week or \$1,000/month for feed and bedding



George & Martha need \$120/month

# Friends Board News

by Jack Kay

In September, the Friends of Deer Hollow Farm Board experienced a significant loss with Tara Sreekrishnan terming out after serving six dedicated years. Tara has been an invaluable board member, wearing many hats while performing several important roles for the Friends. For the past year, Tara has been the Board President, preparing agendas for, and effectively leading Board meetings, communicating with farm staff as well as Mountain View and MROSD representatives, and working closely with FODHF's bookkeeper on financial and related matters. In addition, she actively recruited 5 individuals who have joined the Friend's board over the past 6 months. Four of those members (Jaime Villarreal, Charlotte Xia, Lubab Sheet-Davis, and Sheikh Nayeem) were highlighted in the Summer 2023 Newsletter (see <https://deerhollowfarmfriends.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/FoDHF-Newsletter-Summer23-Final2.pdf>), and the fifth is Lisa Griswold, highlighted below.



During much of her six years of Board service, Tara led the Marketing and Communications (MARCOM) Committee. She always made sure the Friends website was kept up-to-date and our fundraising events were well publicized via email and social media. Tara also headed up the publishing of this newsletter twice yearly, including writing articles, formatting the layout of each edition, coordinating with the printer, and ensuring postage, address labels, and sealing stickers were applied to the printed copies consistent with USPS requirements. We are very fortunate that Tara has agreed to provide guidance to the board and to continue helping with the newsletter as a non-Board member. Aside from supporting the Friends, Tara continues to serve as a Governing Board Member of the Santa Clara County Board of Education and as the Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director for State Senator Dave Cortese.



At the September 2023 Board meeting, Lisa Griswold was unanimously elected to the Board. Lisa works in the marketing operations at a biotech firm in Palo Alto. Outside of work, she enjoys hiking, playing tennis, participating in group aerobics classes, reading, and exploring new exhibits at local art museums. Lisa likes visiting the animals and exploring the garden at the farm and seeing the changes that occur during the different seasons of the year. She has been active in Toastmasters for several years and has been interested in environmental conservation from a young age. She believes one of the keys to ensuring a sustainable healthy plan-

et is to educate future generations. Lisa has already joined the MARCOM Committee and is interested in helping with grants and donor relations. Welcome Lisa!

I want to add a special Thank You to Barbara Cole, who has served as our wonderful Bookkeeper for the past 3.5 years. She is transitioning out of that position this quarter to devote more time to raising her children as they move into their teenage years. Barbara quickly learned the intricacies of FODHF's budget and finances, and provided invaluable service to the Board, even helping with grant-writing during the Covid-19 lockdown when the farm was closed and we were unable to hold in-person gatherings.

## Ongoing Recruitment

The Board currently has 8 members and will be losing one of those members at the start of 2024. We are in need of several additional members. If you love the Farm and care about its future, please consider joining us. While any experience with writing grant applications, raising funds, marketing/publicizing, preparing financial information, and helping to manage events would be ideal, we welcome anyone with enthusiasm about the farm and a willingness to learn new skills. Terms are for three years and time commitment generally averages 4 to 10 hours per month. If you would like to receive an application or to just learn more about the board, please reach out to me at [jack@deerhollowfarmfriends.org](mailto:jack@deerhollowfarmfriends.org).

## FODHF Board Members

Jack Kay, Interim Board President  
Judy Blumenstein, Board Treasurer  
Charlotte Xia, Board Secretary  
Renee Blitzer  
Lubab Sheet-Davis  
Lisa Griswold  
Sheikh Nayeem  
Jaime Villarreal



# Wonderful Friends

We gratefully acknowledge these generous friends and community organizations who contributed to Friends of Deer Hollow Farm between May 1 and October 31, 2023.

## Grants

Santa Clara County  
Town of Los Altos Hills

## Donations

### Red-Tailed Hawk (\$1,000 to \$12,000)

Aart de Geus and Esther John

Anonymous

Iwamoto Family Fund

Manfroy Family Fund, in Memory of  
Dewey Halligan

Merrimac Fund

### California Thresher (\$500 to \$900)

Anonymous

Carla Dorow and Henry Pastorelli

Larry and Donna Aronson

Mary Anne Rohde, in Memory of  
Stephen D. Rohde

Pine Cone Lumber

Tom and Susan Kempe, in  
Memory of Matt Kempe

### Stellar Jay (\$300-\$400)

Amazon Smile Foundation

Gary and Mary Tietz

Katrina Secoy

Tom and Barbara Lustig

### California Quail (\$200-\$250)

Dee Wood, in Memory of Chris  
Wood

Lee Winchell, in Memory of Julie  
Smith and Merry

Lisa Griswold

Tara Sreekrishnan

### Acorn Woodpecker (\$100-\$150)

Dixie Storkman

Josephine Vincent, in Memory of  
Judi McCalla

Kimberly Jorgensen, in Memory of  
Max Jorgensen

Michael Micheletti, via Benevity  
w/Match

Monty Simpson

Sylvia Weiser

### Phoebe (\$50 to \$80)

Chomp & Nibble, Inc

Daniel Dobkin and Nina Wong-  
Dobkin

Jeffrey Richards, in Memory of  
Doris Richards

Kimberly Farrell

Nancy Stuhr

### Hummingbird (\$20 to \$40)

Carolyn Blatt

Himaja Tammineni

Thomas MacDonald

Please join these amazing Wonderful Friends and donate to Friends of Deer Hollow Farm.  
You can make your gift via credit card or PayPal at [www.DeerHollowFarmFriends.org](http://www.DeerHollowFarmFriends.org).

*Thank you to Hassan Lashgari and his team at Pine Press, who have printed this color newsletter for the price of black & white.*



**D**eer Hollow Farm is a ten-acre educational farm in Rancho San Antonio County Park & Open Space Preserve, 22500 Cristo Rey Dr, Cupertino, CA 95014. For information, call 650-903-6430.

**FriendsNews** is published by FoDHF for donors who want to help preserve and improve Deer Hollow Farm. website [www.deerhollowfarmfriends.org](http://www.deerhollowfarmfriends.org) email [info@deerhollowfarmfriends.org](mailto:info@deerhollowfarmfriends.org)



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Your next **FriendsNews** will be mailed in May 2024

*To Our Friends*



**Friends of Deer Hollow Farm**  
PO Box 4282  
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