

## Tapestry's Horse-Human Relationship Program Rides Again!

Tapestry is delighted to announce that our Horse-Human Relationship Program is moving in new and very exciting directions after a *long* year and a half of hiatus. You may remember that a wildfire at our Sowbelly Canyon, Pine Ridge area Nebraska ranch in late summer '06 made many of our programs impossible and, a year later, forced us off the land we loved so deeply. Most of our first year in New Mexico was spent trying to get our feet back under us and figure out how to retool our programs so we could offer them without the significant Land partner Sowbelly Canyon had been to us. And we've finally done it! The Horse-Human Relationship Program is back in action and *growing!*

### New Riding Program Component

Because of our proximity to Santa Fe -- 35 miles on Interstate 25 -- we are now offering a **Riding Program** that allows people to connect with horses in a unique way. As with everything we do, the program is informed by Indigenous Earth-based worldview and uses different ways of learning and knowing -- focusing, of course, on Experiential (learning from physical experiences with and on the horse). In practical terms, the Riding Program helps people learn how to **balance**, **center**, and **connect**. Riding Program enrollment is growing rapidly as word spreads about the special ways our approach helps new, returning, and experienced riders understand and relate to their horses in powerful ways that don't just improve the riding they're already doing, but change it.

Jo Belasco, Director of the Horse-Human Relationship Program, teaches the Riding Program, where her newest student is Carol Mills (pictured at right and on the front page). Carol's wanted to learn how to ride horses all her life, and now -- at 66 -- she's doing it! In her only previous riding experience, she explains, wranglers at Glacier National Park "gave me a placid quarter horse and just said 'follow me'," then led off on a nose-to-tail riding experience. The result was pain that made her leery of what would happen if she took up lessons. "But," says Carol, "there's no pain whatsoever when you're taught correctly. I love every minute of my lessons with Jo."

### A Focus on Partnership

The most salient feature of Tapestry's Horse-Human Relationship Program is that, Instead of seeing horses and humans as adversaries or assuming that humans are "superior" to horses, we teach people how to relate to horses as **partners**. Yes, humans need to be leaders at times, but at other times, we need to let the *horse* lead *us*. When we relate in this way, extraordinary things happen. As stated on our Program's introductory webpage (<http://www.tapestryinstitute.org/horsehuman.html>) "Horses are our partners, our teachers, our friends, our kin. It sounds revolutionary in a horseworld that has been told repeatedly and erroneously that humans are predators and horses are prey; a world that has been led to believe that horses must be submissive to humans at all times; a world that has taken horses, once partners to humans, and turned them into tools for the benefit of humankind without regard for the horses' well-being. But such an idea of relationship, one based on partnership, is how great horse cultures and great horse individuals have experienced the horse-human relationship since it began. Now is the time to realize that humans and horses are more alike than we have been led to believe in modern times, and, at the same time, to come to appreciate



Above, Carol Mills, 66, of Santa Fe finally gets to learn to ride a horse! Jo Belasco, head of Tapestry's Horse-Human Relationship Program and riding instructor in the program, prepares to lunge horse and rider in an exercise. You can see just how happy Carol is to be horseback in the picture below, but you can even see that beautiful smile in the image above! Carol is riding an Arabian mare, Alaya, owned by Patricia Vincent of Santa Fe, another Riding Program participant. In fact, Patricia is a Program enthusiast of sorts, providing help and support we really appreciate. (Thank you, Patricia!) Both pictures were taken by Carol's husband Bill Aneshensel, and are used with permission. Bill says Carol's having such a good time that he just might put down his camera, get on a horse, and learn to ride, too!



our unique differences. This exploration, this understanding, is at the heart of the Horse-Human Relationship Program."

### EQUUS Magazine Publication

One of the first things the new Horse-Human Relationship Program produced was an article that scientifically critiques the "Predator/Prey Model" of horse-human relationship. Co-authored by Jo Belasco and Dawn Adrian, the article will appear in late spring or early summer as a "Perspectives" piece in the well-known magazine *EQUUS*. This article summarizes our investigation of the model's anatomical, neurochemical, genetic, and evolutionary premises, which turn out to be seriously, even fatally, flawed. *(cont. next page)*