

Applegater

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Photo by Barbara Holiday

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Meet your local care farmers

BY ROBERT CASSERLY

As executive director of Sanctuary One, I often field questions from Applegaters who are curious as to what kind of people live and work at our community's first "care farm." Sometimes people have no conception of who we are and are genuinely curious; sometimes people have heard a fantastic rumor and wonder if it's true. Questions may be along the lines of: "Are you a bunch of hippies running around under the full moon hugging trees in naught but your moccasins?" (No, but here's a helpful hint for all you nudists out there: stick to the oaks and madrones—pine sap is awful sticky stuff.) "Are you some new-age woo-woos building a Noah's Ark in anticipation of the return of the Lemurian overlords from outer space?" In other words, "Are you from California?" (No, most of us are from worse places, like Wisconsin, Hawaii, Georgia, and Williams.) "Are you secret government agents sent here to observe and report on my activities?" (That's the Sheriff's Department flying that pesky helicopter over your property, not us.)

Seriously though, here's the real

deal on the people who choose to spend their time at the Sanctuary, farming peace, love, and understanding like other farmers grow corn, beans and squash.

Sansa and Joe Collins are the Sanctuary Manager and Operations Assistant, respectively. They live on the farm with their two young children and a small herd of rescued house pets. Sansa grew up on a macadamia nut farm on the Big Island of Hawaii with three brothers and two sisters. She attended Southern Oregon University, graduating Magna Cum Laude with a BA in english and writing. When growing up she raised a variety of animals including cats, dogs, birds, chickens, rabbits, cattle and a hedgehog. Sansa runs the Sanctuary's always-busy front office and trains community volunteers who help us care for the Sanctuary's 50-plus rescued farm animals. Joe was born in New Jersey, but moved to Hawaii with his family when he was a teenager. Joe is the Sanctuary's technology manager but he also helps with irrigation, fencing, animal care,

general maintenance and whatever else needs to get done.

Gene Griffith is the Sanctuary's Permaculture Coordinator. Gene was born in Augusta, Georgia and has spent much of his life in the southeastern region of the U.S., including the hills of South Carolina and the mountains of Tennessee. For over 20 years Gene worked as an industrial engineer specializing in controls, hydraulics and pneumatics. His job involved looking for ways to use innovations to increase efficiency in systems and machines. He attended Tulane University in New Orleans and has a degree in Electromechanical Engineering Technology from Augusta Technical College. Gene studies permaculture and then teaches the rest of us how to farm as affordably and sustainably as possible.

Della Merrill is the Sanctuary's Education Consultant. Della has been teaching natural horsemanship and organic gardening skills to youth and adults for years. Della's education includes a BA in Communications and an MA in Teaching from Southern

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your donation,

The Applegater

Photos clockwise from top left: Volunteer Carrie Lee brushing a rescued horse; Lisa, a 700-pound Yorkshire pig with Sansa Collins (Photo by Bob Pennel of the Medford Mail Tribune); Visitor admiring Lola, a rescued Appolosa; Friday, one of the farm's "ambassadors" greeting a young visitor; Lady and Duchess, a pair of rescued burros, nibbling apples offered by a guest; and Wilbur, a Nubian goat who enjoys being the center of attention.