

Looking Forward

Looking back to see a better future



By Mark James Miller, September 28, 2018

“Eighties for animals” is easy to remember, part of the reason Diane Dieterich, founder of Greener Pastures Farm Sanctuary, chose it as a meme for her organization’s fund-raiser at the Oddfellows Hall in San Luis Obispo. The rest of the reason is simple: “I love the ‘80s,” she said.

If you’ve ever felt nostalgic for the 1980s, this was the place to be. Memorabilia was everywhere you looked, from the DeLorean sitting outside the entrance, to the ‘80s music playing inside.

There were posters of ‘80s movies — “Ghostbusters,” “Back to the Future” — icons — Cher, Madonna, Tom Petty — and people dressed in ‘80s fashions. A wide-screen TV played clips from television shows like “The Love Boat,” “Family Ties,” and “Married With Children.”

But beneath the happy exterior was a deeper purpose — raising money so Greener Pastures can find a permanent home in which to care for abused and abandoned farm animals.

“Three to 10 acres of farmland would be ideal,” said Diane. She and other members of Greener Pastures want to not only save and care for abused farm animals, they want to raise awareness of the value of these animals and what they have to offer to human beings.

“They are just as loving as any pet you might have,” she said. “We have to stop seeing these animals as food. They are so much more than that.”

While the walls were decorated with ‘80's posters, the tables were packed with everything vegan. There were delicious vegan meatballs, chocolate vegan cookies, vegan cheese, crackers and sausage.

“A Guide to Going Vegan” pointed out that for nearly any dish you can think of, there is a vegan alternative, from hamburgers and hot dogs to ice cream, cake and other desserts. The more vegan food we eat, the less the demand for animal food, meaning fewer animals will be slaughtered and fewer will be made to suffer in the often cruel circumstances in which farm animals are kept.

It was this realization of animals’ suffering needlessly that prompted Diane to establish Greener Pastures Farm Sanctuary. “In an agricultural area like San Luis Obispo there are so many unwanted farm animals with no place to go, I realized they are just as gentle and loving as our pets at home.”

Diane soon became aware that Greener Pastures could do more than provide a home for neglected farm animals. Because of the unconditional love the animals offer, they can help in the healing process of abused children, veterans suffering from post traumatic stress disorder, troubled teens, people struggling with addiction, and any other at-risk person that can benefit from the affection and warmth that comes from bonding with animals.

“Until one has loved an animal, a part of one’s soul remains unawakened,” French novelist Anatole France once commented. This seems especially apropos when thinking of animals and humans helping each other heal. A. A.

Milne, author of “Winnie the Pooh,” echoed this when he said, “Some people talk to animals. Not many listen. That’s the problem.”

Listening to animals is not a problem at Greener Pastures, and the sooner it can find a permanent home the better, for then Diane can get on with her dream of helping animals and humans at the same time.

To find out more about Greener Pastures, contact them by calling (805) 543-3786, or email GreenerPasturesSanctuary@gmail.com. Greener Pastures is also on Facebook: www.facebook.com/greenerpasturesfarmsanctuary/.

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