

Tuffy's Got a new Home

It is so hard to turn down horses that are not starved. This is one of the reasons that we try not to go and see the horses people want us to take in instead of the owner trying to finding a new home for the horse. A man called this month from Randolph County and wanted us to take in three horses. He couldn't tell me anything about the horses other than one was lame and shouldn't be ridden. He couldn't even tell me if the other two had been trained to ride. He did know how old the horses were and was not interested in doing anything that would make it easier to find a home for the horses. They had been his father's horses.

It is not always the owner of the horse or horses that calls. It was the daughter-in-law that was concerned and looking for a solution for the 30 year old gelding. The well was not working, no one was living on the property, and there was no feed or hay present. The large black water tub had huge globs of algae floating on top. The property was overgrown with huge weeds and no grass. The small area that we first saw Tuffy in was a dirt lot. He ran right up to us.

Melanie went on this call with me and felt we just couldn't leave the horse in those living conditions. We had the owner sign off and we made arrangements to pick up the old boy that Saturday. The property was on a road that should have circled around, but part of it was flooded out. Melanie drove her car to show Jared where he could park the trailer after turning it around. Everyone jumped in the car and Melanie drove around the other side of the circle to the property where Tuffy was located. Jared and Christina did a great job leading him through the flooded swampland to the trailer.

The owner was present and was rude to us even though we may have been Tuffy's only hope for an extended life. She acted angry that we were saving the horse from a horrible life. This is not the first time we have had an owner act out when we were there to help.

Tuffy is doing great, but needs all the normal care that should have been given to a horse. The rabies vaccine has been given and his hooves have been trimmed. He is a happy horse with grass to munch, all the hay he could possibly eat and good feed with needed supplements. He also has a friend for the first time in 30 years.



Why Can't Just Anyone Ride Our Horses?

It seems like every time we have a good group of volunteers that are working with training the horses, some qualify for horses and take one or two rescues home. Young people go off to college, folks move away and on and on. Then we have to start all over again with new volunteers to help to work with the horses to get them ready for new loving quality homes. The ground training is fun to watch and the horses build trust and bond with the person that is working with them. But our folks don't have the abilities to work with the rescues under saddle. *(Cont. on Page 2)*

(Cont. from Page 1) **Why Can't Just Anyone Ride Our Horses?**

For years we have needed a nice large gentle horse that HPS could use to help the volunteers that are working with the horses, to ride and for others to improve their riding abilities. We had hoped that the right horse would come to the sanctuary and that has not happened over so many years. We have had so many wonderful horses come and go to homes, but none that would have been a good lesson horse.



Several months ago we received a grant that would allow us to look for the right horse in the equine market place. Two of us took the task on to find that special horse: had to be large boned, good conformation, gentle and not easily excited, not too young or too old, reasonable cost, three gaited and a plus if the horse was trained both English and Western.

Tons of emails and phone calls and frustration finally brought us to the sweet mare we purchased for \$1,000. Dawn visited a number of horses that were misrepresented in the ads. Our mare is a Percheron cross, 15 hands tall, and weighs about 1,500 pounds. The less that someone knows about riding correctly, it calls for that person

to ride a larger horse. This also applies to taller people.

A diet and exercise will be just what she needs to turn some of the fat to muscle. At some point she had a slight laminitis and at the present her soles are thin and need to be built up. We have worked with horses like this many times and know we can help to take care of this issue.

This was a great experience for the folks that one day will have their own horses. Several young folks got to watch the pre-purchase exam and hear what the veterinarian had to say. Negotiation is an important part of any purchase and it should be based upon reality. You shouldn't fall in love with color or breed, which too many people do.

Thing will progress slowly so she can get to know the volunteers she will be working with, feel comfortable here at the sanctuary and be ready to learn soon bonding and trust with our folks before any riding is done.

Remember you are welcome to visit any Saturday between 1:00 to 4:00 pm. We have always been very open for folks to come and see what we are all about.

The Stalking of Tusca

Do you believe in love at first sight? I've heard that it can happen, although until recently, I've never witnessed it. What happened to make me think twice? Just wait till you hear!

It was a Tuesday morning at the sanctuary. Weather was nice, all the horses healthy and happy, just a normal start to my day. But something exciting would be happening after morning feeding time. Tusca and Meeka were going to be introduced to the herd! This was my first time taking part in this process. Joanie had told me how it is done, with the horses being led all around the sanctuary, being shown where all the waterers are, the hay feeders and the boundaries in the fields. A couple volunteers, Lanie and Bob, got to do this fun introduction while I began meds on the other horses. I did not turn any of them out so that Bob and Lanie would have plenty of time to introduce Tusca and Meeka to all the new surroundings, without the distractions of the other horses.

There's Tusca, standing in front of barn one with Meeka, watching me let out the first horse, Saragon. She pinned her ears back at him, then followed her normal course to the hay feeder. Next was Shasta. I opened her stall door and she took a step out and caught her first glimpse of Tusca and BAM, love at first sight!

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Your donations are so needed to maintain the many horses at the sanctuary!!! Our heartfelt thanks to each and every one. Every month we receive the wonderful messages of caring, appreciation, and prayer for blessings. They bring tears to our eyes. Some of the companies' website are not secure and we cannot open them to secure the names of the donors. I hope they fix it soon.

In memory of Padre and Inca. By Jodi Douthit

Peace, love and health. By Susan Kotraba

Happy Birthday Ann! Love, Mom Stacker

"In loving memory of Angel, Little Pony, Big Heart - August 19, 2002. Always Roberta

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The Stalking of Tusca *(Cont. from Page 2)*

Shasta literally stopped dead for a second, and then slowly started sashaying over to Tusca. Now many of you reading this may know exactly what a mare in heat does to attract a guy, and can now imagine what was going on, but I certainly had never seen it and I'd be willing to bet Tusca sure didn't either because he slowly took a step back while looking completely confused and a little scared! I'll hand it to Shasta, she sure threw herself at him with all of the charm she could muster, but he would have nothing to do with it! After slowly walking away with her following, still trying to convince him that she is the hottest thing at the ranch, he takes off running. But wait, Shasta must love a good chase because off she went after him.

Poor Meeka had no idea what was going on and tried sticking close to her good friend Tusca which, of course, did not go over well with Shasta. So off the three of them went....but it gets even better. Down at barn two, I am letting out the other horses after completing their meds. This includes Shasta's good buddies, Bandolero and Sparrow. You can imagine their dismay at finding Shasta completely absorbed in stalking Tusca! They begged and pleaded and cajoled to no end. So all they could do was chase after her and hope that reason would return to their dear friend! Now, poor Tusca and Meeka thought they had three crazy horses after them!

Tusca decides enough with this nonsense! He starts to take matters in his own hands and turns to defend himself, ears laid back, teeth bared, tail swishing, and he charges at Shasta!

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The Stalking of Tusca *Continued from page #3*



She jumps out of the way, only to lunge back at him with all the love she is feeling. This dance of theirs is frightening to Meeka, Bandolero and Sparrow, and they act out by showing their own displays of “affection”.

This lasted for quite a few days, making feeding time a little crazy trying to separate Shasta from her unbreakable infatuation. Slowly though, over the course of a week, her passion started to fizzle out and things in the barns calmed down. Now, she casts him longing looks every now and then, but seems satisfied to stick to her tried and true buddies. Tusca, I’m sure, is deeply relieved! Love at first sight? Definitely, but it was like an explosion that burned out quickly leaving little to no damage.

Tusca is in the right stall with Shasta trying to get in. Meeka is in the left stall and Bandolero is outside.