



OVER HERD

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Under Your Christmas Tree

By the Horses of HPS

with assistance from Joanie Benson

The Christmas season is upon us and you've had your shopping spree,
The carefully selected presents are placed while on your knee.
Christmas Eve has arrived; your home's aglow with lights of the tree,
Yet in the still of the night your mind is not free.
"What have I forgotten on this special eve?"



The horses have been talking, and rallied to take care of their needs,
"How shall we help them remember to send a little to buy our feeds?"
They talked and they argued and laid all their plans, each of the breeds,
It was a desperate plan that called for some brave deeds.



Inca taught all the horses the skill of opening door knobs,
Navajo showed how to open latches and a hook with head bobs.
All the horses and ponies left so quietly knowing their jobs.
Each found the lovely home of their choice and crept inside,
All the presents, stockings and good smells, and each cried.



*"This family forgot me this year, but never again,
for I will wait for
morning,
All snug in the presents under the tree and there I
will be with no
warning.
I have been so hungry and starved for so long, but
now HPS has made me
free*

*Hee-Hee! You will never again forget
once you find a horse under your
tree."*



A Christmas Tale of a No-Tail Horse

By Joanie Benson

It was a relatively quiet Friday afternoon. Deborah and I had just finished a cup of coffee, and I asked her if she had time to go with me to check on a couple of horses here in Rowan County. Deborah is a great person to take on abuse calls; she stays calm and reasonable when dealing with the owners.



We knew we were at the right property when we saw the poor creature standing at the end of a very small fenced area. There were only weeds in the dirt lot and a small amount of what looked like straw in one corner.

After knocking on the door several times, no one answered. The emaciated black Quarter Horse mare, with her head down, slowly ambled towards the fence where we were standing. She seemed too weak to lift her head as high as the wire. Her eyes were dull and sad looking. She had NO tail! It had been eaten off. I have seen this before when horses are protein deprived. There was another young horse in the enclosure that needed only about 50 pounds to be up to weight. Since there was no way to separate the two horses, the young one was getting most of what was put out for them to eat. When there was not enough food, he ate HER TAIL.

As we were assessing the horses, the back door opened and a sleepy-eyed man appeared. He told us that the horse was his wife's and they had been taking an afternoon nap. He went and got his wife and we explained how bad the horse's condition was, how she was in grave danger of dying. We have seen thinner horses, but seldom have we seen them this weak and still standing. After some additional persuading, the wife signed the horse over to HPS.

The owner said she had the horse for five years, and the that past owner braided the tail too often and it broke off..... (not likely!) She told us the mare was 28 years old. One of our investigators had been to this property about six months earlier when the horse still had a tail and, at that time, the owner told her that the horse was 18 years old. My, how she has aged in six months!

We raced back to the sanctuary to locate a trailer and arrange to get her out that evening. I called Perry Morgan and he agreed to help out with the pick up. Off he and I went as darkness was starting to set in.

The poor old girl stepped right up on the trailer. She was so weak that she went down on the trip to the sanctuary. This is why we never tie horses when transporting them. It took just a little help with the lead line to help her balance so she could get up. We carefully turned her around and off she stepped.

It was now dark out and the safest place for her was in one of our hospital stalls for the night. We put in fresh water and huge pile of hay for her. Early in the morning she was still munching away and the hay was down to very little left.

She is too vulnerable to stay out in cold, windy, rainy weather and has had to spend a good deal of time in the hospital stall. Pawnee came down with a viral infection and has been up in the hospital stall next to her. Both are happy to have the other horse's company. The garage doors have been kept closed to keep down cold drafts on that end of the barn.

If this poor starved horse had not been rescued, I do not think she would have lived much longer. This new girl will have a Merry Christmas and a new chance at life because of **you!**



Horse Angels of the Month:

When Joanie was getting bids for the second barn, the bid for building the shutters was outrageous at almost \$16,000. This bid was submitted by the same people who built the shutters for the first new barn. Certainly it was a huge job and the materials are not cheap, but she felt the bid was out of line and too high.

We have a wonderful member, **Bob Miller**, who has done many repair and building jobs here at the sanctuary and the work he produced was always done with great care and professionalism. If you know Bob, you know that he loves tools. Joanie approached him and asked if he would like to have a welder and a chop saw. Bob said, "Oh! Yes! I don't have either." Joanie offered to have HPS to buy the two tools and to pay him to build the shutters. Bob was reluctant to accept the offer as suggested, but agreed to do the work (and accept the tools) only if the price paid him to build the shutters was lowered considerably. Joanie agreed to his "ridiculously low price."

Enter our other HPS Angels, **Steve and Pam Carlton**, who had supplied T-posts and wire to replace some very poor fencing at the sanctuary. Steve even had these materials installed for us! When Steve learned of the need for the second barn, he supplied all of the extruded aluminum for the shutters at no cost to HPS.

With the funds that **Bob Miller** and **Steve and Pam Carlton** saved HPS in building the barn shutters, the sanctuary was able to build the covered hay feeder. This covered hay feeder, in turn, saves HPS money every day due to the reduced waste of hay compared to having it out in the weather and where the horses could tramp all over it.

***God bless our horse angels—the Millers and the Carltons—
for their kindnesses in making our horses' lives so much better!***

Honors and Memorials

Merry Christmas!!! In honor of so many and ALL they have done for my Critters and me. A Merry Christmas donation has been made in honor of Joanie Benson, HPS, the volunteers and a bunch of other special friends. With much appreciation!! My Critters & Me! (Spunky Dagenhart)

In memory of "Apache Pride," better known as "Pache", who was laid to rest on November 7, 2009 after a horrific accident in the pasture.
By Mary A. Myers

If only all of our horses knew how fortunate they are! We grew up in Salisbury and know how important this organization is!

By Jack & Lisa Towell

In honor of our granddaughter, Avery Medlin, on her 8th birthday. Love from Vicky & Henry Medlin.

In honor of all the kind, caring feeders, past and present.
From Dottie Rebhan



The Christmas Season

Our hopes and prayers go to each and every one of you for a joyous holiday season. We pray that if you have had any issues caused by the slowing economy, they will be quickly remediated in the New Year.

As bad as things may have been for some people, I doubt that any have had it as horrible as the horses that come to the sanctuary. Their issues are life or death! We are currently fighting for the lives of three horses who have cancer. Their treatment **is working**, but it costs a great deal every month. Part of the formula for the cure calls for distilled alcohol liquor. If you have some sitting around, please donate it to help the horses.

The average cost to care for your horses is \$200 per month per horse. That amount is surprisingly reasonable considering the condition of the horses when they come to us and the special needs many of our horses have. This cost is way below the national average for the monthly care of a horse. What makes this reasonable amount so challenging is when you multiply the \$200 by 46 horses - that comes to \$9,200 a month to supply their needs for hay, feed, supplements, farrier care, deworming and vet care. (And, it's time to deworm again.)

This has been a tough year for the sanctuary, with so many horses to care for and *donations down by close to \$15,000* this year. The Mane Event was great fun, but we did not net out as much as we had hoped for or projected in the budget. We have tightened the budget down so far it feels as if the belly button is touching the spine - like the condition of so many of our horses when they arrive at the farm.

This month, there are sixteen horses who are due for their dental work. The cost for this work will be about \$2,000, but we do not have the funds. There are always added vet costs each month. Sahara had a terrible ulcer on her eye that required two vet visits. There were Pawnee's viral infection, Noble's colic, two other vet visits that I cannot even recall what they were for and who knows what else will be needed before the end of the month. I have told all the horses that they are not allowed to get sick! Sometimes they just will not pay attention! (I whisper to my horse, but he doesn't listen!)



Please help make Christmas merry for your horses! They need for each and every one of you to care!

*The weight of love is the heaviest burden
you have learned to carry.
In the silence of the Heavens,
It's a dream that wakes you
with the sound of your own voice singing.*
~ Marjory H. Wentworth

Monthly Donations & Contributors

Another year is ending, and we **know** our 46 horses would not be here without the devoted support of our wonderful benefactors—YOU. The words “Thank you” feel inadequate to express the deep appreciation of all of us at HPS. May your Christmas or Chanukah be filled with the same joy you bring to the lives of the horses at the sanctuary through your generous contributions.

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Check out our Website:

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How YOU Can Help:

***Keep Those Aluminum Beverage Cans Rolling In!**

Many thanks to our wonderful members who continue to collect and transport aluminum beverage cans to the ranch to the Can City holding area. This is one of our ongoing fundraisers. Every bit helps and is put to good use on the horses' behalf. Your efforts matter and are appreciated! Let's maximize our opportunities to collect cans.....put a bag in your break room at work....ask your family, friends, and neighbors for help. **Please note that this is for aluminum beverage cans ONLY.** Thus far in Calendar Year 2009, the ranch has made **\$ 601** on the cans. We'll be doing another run in a couple of weeks, so our total will be increasing. Thank you for your kindness is taking the time and going to the trouble to do this for the horses. If our four-footed friends could speak, they would say,

"Thank you for caring enough about us to help!"

***Give Us Your Email Address!**

Do we have your email address? If not, please consider sending it to us so that we may email to you when each new issue of the newsletter is ready. This will save precious pennies in paper, ink and postage by cutting down the number of copies we mail each month. Our snail mail list hovers around 800; if you can help us cut that down, there will be more money to spend where YOU want it spent—on the precious ponies at the sanctuary.

Thank You!