



OVER HERD

Volume 27 Issue 2

February 2023

Happy
Valentine's
Day

Rudy's Story

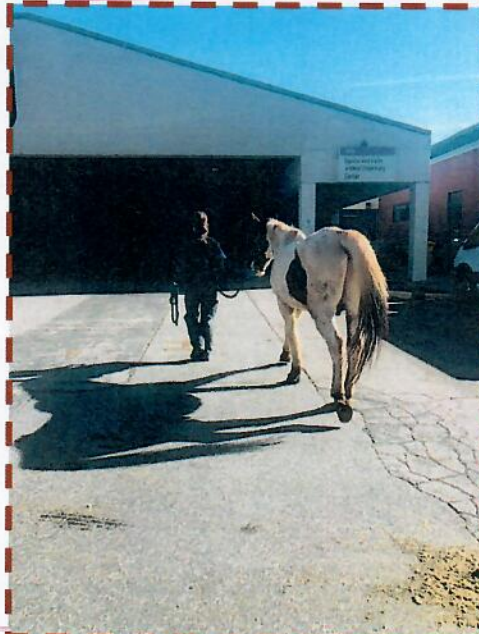
By: Christina

As many of you know from previous newsletters, Rudy came to HPS with large cancerous masses on his sheath. We had an appointment on January 18th, at the North Carolina State University Veterinary Hospital to see if they could help him.

We didn't know Rudy's history before he arrived at the sanctuary, but it was apparent that he had difficulty trusting people. I worked with him for two weeks to get him to trust me so I could load him on the trailer to be transported to the hospital. Every morning I had to start at the beginning by haltering him, then slowly working on him allowing me to touch him without stepping away. He eventually reached a point where I could brush him, and he was relaxed being with me. As I stroked him, he would lay his head on my chest with his eyes closed. He was such a sweet boy once I got through that fearful shell of his.

The morning of his appointment, I had to take my time loading him on the trailer, but he did it and stayed calm the whole trip. When we arrived at the hospital, they took Rudy in to do a thorough examination of his sheath. When they came out to talk to me after the examination, I could see from their faces that it wasn't going to be good news, and my heart broke. They explained that Rudy's cancer had spread beyond his sheath into his body wall and the glands located above his sheath. They said surgery would be extremely risky, and they would be unable to remove all the cancer. Also, it was likely the cancer had spread to other parts of his body. I had to make the tough decision to let them euthanize Rudy.

If anyone asks me what the most challenging part of rescue is, its days like these. Where you have worked so hard to gain the trust of a horse, bonded with him, and hoped to get him the help he needs, only to realize it's in the best interest of the animal to say goodbye. I went back to Rudy with tears in my eyes and spent some time with him. I told him I was sorry we couldn't fix him. On the way home, I got a little angry just thinking about his previous owner. If only he had taken care of this issue when it first started, and if he didn't have the money, why not surrender him to us sooner? Then we may have saved that sweet, young horse that had only twelve years on this earth. Because of negligence, Rudy's life was cut short.



Thank you to all who donated funds for Rudy's surgery. HPS has added to the money to bring it to \$5,000. and it will be set aside for any future horse that arrives with medical issues requiring expensive specialized care. It is known as the **Rudy Fund**.

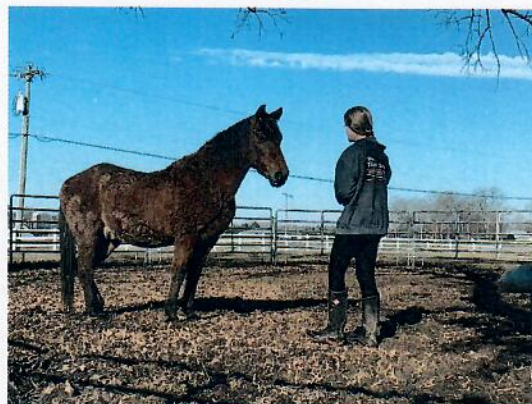
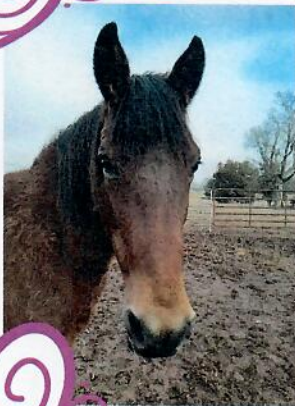
Training Char By Grace

Char is a new horse that came to us slightly aggressive and very skittish. He tends to strike out when put in uncomfortable situations. Typically, there can be two kinds of aggressive horses; horses that are aggressive for dominance and horses that are aggressive out of fear. Char is very cautious of humans; pushing him too far makes him unsure and fearful. Therefore, spending lots of time getting him used to people is essential.

A common mistake is giving treats to encourage a horse to accept human contact. Although treats may encourage Char to approach and be more receptive of people, it also creates an expectation. If this expectation is not constantly met, it might result in nippy or even food-aggressive behavior. It also creates frustration and is therefore, counterproductive. For now, building a relationship on trust, not an expectation of treats is the best approach.

Rushing a horse is another way to create frustration and lack of progress. Acting like you only have five minutes will take you five hours. With Char, I have been simply going in the round pen and letting him get used to me. Each day I might push him a little farther, but I will quickly work around what his body language is telling me. One day I might gently rub the bridge of his nose. The next, I will slowly work back to his jaw or even further up his forehead. It is a process that requires patience. Some days I will leave feeling extremely accomplished, and other days I leave feeling as if I took one step forward and three steps back. However, looking back on his progress, Char now comes entirely into his stall, approaches people, and accepts gentle strokes up to his shoulder.

What I love most about getting the privilege to work with this horse is the challenge he brings. It is imperative to watch every little detail presented in his body language. The slight tenseness in his lip, the sharpness of his eye, and the subtle movement in his shoulder when he's uncomfortable. I can also see the way he might lean his body weight ever so slightly toward me when he is simply thinking about approaching to get a gentle scratch. Observing his body language so carefully helps me make decisions such as; should I back up? Should I step forward? I also see how one move from my body language might affect him. If I lean in too sharply, he might back up. Even something as simple as shifting weight between my legs can create a reaction. Of course, with time and becoming more comfortable, he has been less reactive to simple body movements. All in all, Char is headed down the right path! As Joanie always says, some of the worst horses turn out to be the best ones.





CHICKLET & CHUCKLES



HONEY & LYNN



BRONCO & RISING STAR



EBIE



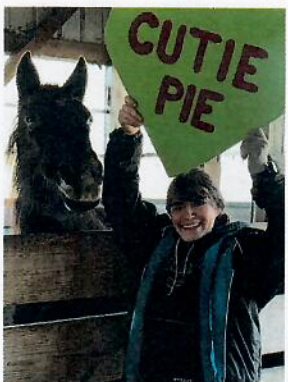
HEAVENLY & JUDY



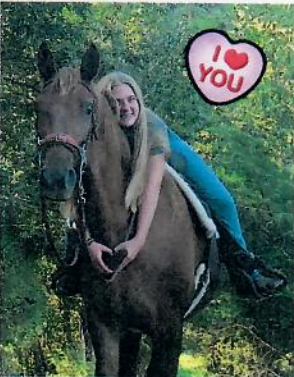
GINGER



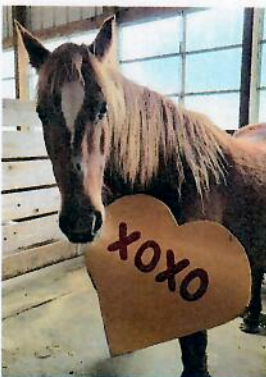
WHISTLER & JACKIE



EBONY & BARBARA



TUSCA & GRACE



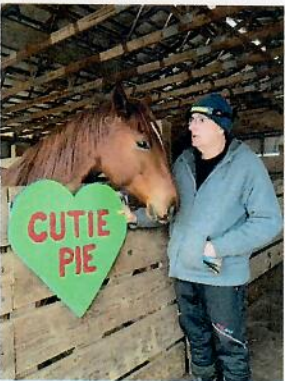
NINA



SUNSHINE



HEAVENLY & LAUREN



HONEY & STEVE



ASLAN & CHIEF



EBONY & MICHELLE



Pesky Canada Geese

For years we battled a flock of Canada geese that had taken up residence in our pond field. Geese eat grass, horses eat grass, it was an ongoing battle! Sometimes it seemed the geese ate more grass than the horses. We could fence the horses out of the field when the grass was fragile, but couldn't fence geese out of the field. The geese particularly enjoyed the tender new grass that sprouted after we seeded the fields in the fall.

One year we installed a decoy coyote in the field near the pond. It was very realistic and worked for a time, but the horses pulled off the tail and knocked it over, and eventually the geese caught on to the ruse. Canine harassment is an effective geese deterrent, so our two "livestock guard dogs" should have been assisting with the problem, but were more interested in chasing delivery trucks than geese.

Last year, we decided to address our "manure mountain" by spreading it over the pond field to improve the soil and reduce the ragwort that had taken over the acreage. As a part of that project, volunteers installed a black plastic contractor's fence around the pond to reduce erosion. As an added benefit, the black plastic fencing is acting as a geese deterrent. Changing their habitat by putting a barrier (the black plastic fence) between the water and their food has made the geese feel unsafe. They have moved on to "greener pastures." Problem solved!!

Economic Challenges

We realize the current economic challenges caused by inflation; impact everyone, so we are so thankful for your continued concern for HPS and your faithful donations. We really do need your help!

Everything is going up in price. Following are a few examples of the hundreds of items where we are seeing significant increases in our expenses:

Hay – The cost of hay has increased by \$1000 to a total of \$3000 a month. Over the winter the horses consume even more hay, since the cold weather impacts the amount of grass for grazing.

Reseeding – The cost of the annual reseeding of our fields has increased by 31%.

Supplements – The cost of Aloe Vera juice has increased by 52%. Most starved and abused horses arrive at the sanctuary with ulcers due to stress. A half cup of Aloe Vera juice given to these horses morning and evening aids in healing their ulcers. We order 18 gallons of the juice at a time.

Veterinarian costs!

Additionally, given the hardship folks are facing, it is realistic to expect more horses will come to the sanctuary. It would hurt our hearts if we had to turn horses away because we did not have the resources to feed and care for horses that need us.

Thank you for making sure that we can continue to aid each horse in need!

In Honor of Kim, Peter and Daisy Whitney for Rudy-s eye surgery. By Ann Seagle

The Sunday the Over the Herd Gang is honored by Lillian Wright

In Loving Memory of Calyton Gonzalez, Sr. By Kim Lane

Happy Birthday Tiffany Ferebee. By Ann and Benjy Seagle

Happy Birthday to Glenda Thompson. By Ann and Benjy Seagle

In honor and Memorial of Judith Torrey-Carter. By Ann and Benjy Seagle

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