



CHILDREN'S INTERNATIONAL

WRITING COMPETITION



WAR HORSE STORIES

Voice For The Horse would like to thank all those who supported the 2014 War Horses Children's Writing Competition to include Valerie Ormond for developing our online learning resources, Carole Gagnon and Cynthia D'Errico for the French translation of the learning resources, Delia Pacheco for her incredible art work for our War Horses poster and book cover and Ruth Quinn for drawing the illustrations to go with the story submissions.

Thank you to the following authors who donated books to award our young writers:

Tony Stromberg – The Forgotten Horses

Alexandra Joy Gritta and Charity Book Series – Mystery at Silver Key Stables

P.J. O'Dwyer – Relentless – A Novel

Denise Lee Branco – Horse at the Corner Post

Birgit Stutz and Lawrence Scanlan – The Rescue of Belle and Sundance

Special thanks to our Ambassador Team Tiffany Desrosiers, Olivia Pero and Matthew McCormack who have generously donated their their time and talents for our 2014 War Horses Writing Competition.

We invite you to visit our web sites at www.HorsesHelpKids.com to learn more about our new "Leading The Change Music Project For Kids".

Our Mission:

"To Bridge the Gap between Horse and Human in our Modern Day World."



This book of short stories written by our Voice For The Horse Writing Competitors from our 2014 Children's War Horses Writing Competition is dedicated to Joy Richardson, Senior Ambassador of Voice For The Horse. We are pleased to have received excellent essay submissions from four young writers from the U.S.A., Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. It has been our honor to have Joy as a dedicated Ambassador for our cause who advocates to this day for the humane care, treatment and management of all horses.

Joy is the daughter of a farmer in England and was born in a farmhouse in a tiny hamlet on the edge of the Fens, called The Limes, Twenty near Bourne in Lincolnshire. Joy regularly sat on a pony before she could walk, and that was at 10 months of age. Her entire life has been dedicated to working with and loving horses; this resulted in many International Championships in England, Canada and the United States where she judged a variety of disciplines. Hunters, quarter horses and thoroughbreds have taken her through all disciplines from fox hunting, working hunter, jumping, eventing, western performance and dressage. Joy has lived in Canada since 1957 where she worked as an interior designer in Vancouver. For the years following she was involved with the Vancouver Art Gallery chairing their enthusiastic social committees before her husband and herself purchased property in Aldergrove, B.C. In 1969 the two of them established the fine 60 horse Heritage Boarding Stables. During the next seven years Joy was also an inspector with the SPCA.

Joy joined the WRNS at the end of the war serving in the south of England at the naval base Chatham where she was exposed to the German buzz bombs flying over the English Channel from France. Often times herself and her Navy mates would be forced to take cover in ditches or under doorways for protection from the many bombs which flew over them with loud and fiery strength, many hitting tree tops, church steeples or simply just dying out as they ran out of fuel. Sometimes they would see dozens of them overhead enroute to London. This part of the war was known as The Blitz. After the war Joy received three medals, one for joining the service, one for being in for Armistice and one for serving during The Blitz.

Joy has written for various equestrian magazines over the years and has been successful in finalizing her sequel to "Pride and Joy" and to her autobiography, "Joy for Living" which became a best seller.

As a Chairman of the British Quarter Horse Association in 1978, Joy was further elected as their AQHA Director. In 1983 Joy returned to Langley with her horses and soon become President of the B.C. Quarter Horse Association. During this time Joy was also elected as the Vice President of the Langley Horse Federation from which she was elected Chairman of Road Safety in 1995, working with the Municipality and was Chairman for The Spirit of the Horse Memorial Garden in Campbell Valley Park the following year. Joy was awarded Horse Person of the Year from B.C. Horse Council's 17,000 members in 1997 and received the Fraser Valley Woman of Excellence Award in Sport category in 1999.



Joyful
Horsewoman 
JOY RICHARDSON

The Panda-Like Horse

By Sophy Cullington, Age 12

United Kingdom

The air is electric. A battle hive of devastation. Sky like water, reflecting the earth below.

The sky is black.

Loud cries and frenzied swearing pierced the cabin boy's ears as he studied, interested, the proceedings in the harbour below. Down there, men were attempting to haul a distressed foal to the ship, but weren't making much headway. The foal was desperately trying to get back to an elderly-looking horse...its mother, the boy supposed. The foal was kicking and snorting madly in the attempt. The boy snorted himself, but in laughter. In all of his years, he'd never seen a little horse put up such a fight. Before he turned away, the boy noted that the foal was completely white except for his black face and a single stripe running from its nose to its forehead.

That's funny, the boy thought to himself, looks a bit like a panda!

...

Noise seems to boom from everywhere, ringing loudly in my ears. It's painful just to listen to it. But I keep going, I keep galloping...galloping into it all, beyond a care. Galloping for all I'm worth.

But I'm not worth much.

...

Hawk eyes stared, as the thousands of horses imported from America were led off the ship at Marseilles. The hawk eyes belonged to Mr. Jenson, who needed horses to pull ambulances in the upcoming war. His eyes fell instantly upon a foal, small, but sturdily built. He did some calculations in his head. It was young now, but would last for many years and certainly seemed strong...half a dozen men were trying to restrain it in vain. A dry smile formed on Mr Jenson's rusty lips and he took a meaningful step forward toward the foal, the foal with a distinct white stripe over its black face...the foal, Mr. Jenson would fleetingly recollect later, looked somewhat like a panda.

...

I trip, and the bone showing through my thin leg snaps. I plunge into agony as my body smashes to the ground, my scream echoing through the dust. Then, everything is silent.

...

In that wintry March, when the tadpoles turned into frogs, a farmer's wife stood by her gate, in the French city, Arras. She was waiting in hope of seeing the famous horse that had tugged an ambulance of nine injured soldiers to a hospital three miles away, and that apparently had gotten a gash on his neck and a torn tendon whilst doing it. She stared in admiration as the horse walked solemnly along the road. She was used to horses because she had some herself back at the farm, but she had special respect for this one. Such a noble creature! Could do with a good brush down, though. Not particularly attractive, altogether, when one thought about it. Amazing though...oh yes! Really quite amazing!

A little girl rushed down the path to gaze in awe at the horse. "Isn't she beautiful!" the girl exclaimed. "I think that mark on her nose is from a star a fairy dropped on her when she was born, to give her good luck."

"It's a male horse, sweetheart," the wife corrected. "But he'll need that fairy's luck, alright. He's going into the cavalry next week. Anyway, I thought he looked a bit like a panda myself!" The wife chuckled.

...

I'm here on my side, under a dark blanket and feeling as though I'm in a dream, in some parallel universe. Dimly, I sense the battle commencing around me, but it's all in slow motion. All smothered, completely silent. I see the bright tunnel advancing towards me, but I welcome it. It brings peace, calm, and an end to my suffering. I breathe out for the last time, as the light engulfs me. My eyes drift shut and I give my life up with the whisper of a smile.

...

THE END



The British Are Coming

By Olivia Pero, Age 10

Richland , MI. U.S.A.

One dark, starry night, a man rode me from Boston all the way to Lexington to warn the people of the advancing British soldiers. The journey was long and tiring, but I, a fast Narragansett pacer with a strong stamina, could run for some time without getting tired.

My brave rider was named Paul Revere.

We galloped to Lexington from Boston, taking only short breaks. Paul was determined to warn those people, and when we finally arrived, I had shiny sweat glistening on my neck and shoulders. I breathed raggedly through my flared nostrils.

“Here we are, Brown Beauty,” Paul said patting me fondly on my neck. “We still have a lot to do though!” Houses sat in darkness, with no light shining from their windows. As we continued to through the streets, Paul began shouting, “The British are coming!” I whinnied loudly trying to help Paul get people’s attention.

A man stepped out of one of the houses with a musket in hand. “Pardon me, but what was that you said?” He asked.

“The British are coming!” Paul repeated, and we rode on. We kept galloping as we passed woods full of oak and maple trees. My hooves pounded the dirt road, dust flying behind us.

Soon we neared another house. Like the others, its lights had been dimmed. There was a gray hound dog sleeping on the porch under a growing puddle of drool. I squealed tossing my head. Once again, Paul announced, “The British are coming!” Inside, a candle flickered to life and the shadow of a woman appeared. Her small frame turned towards the window, peering out curiously. A man in a nightcap soon joined her. They had heard.

Paul slapped his riding crop on my left flank and gave a kick, urging me to continue on. Faster, faster we went! Paul stood up in the irons to take some of the weight off of my back. Before long, we reached five more homes resting comfortably in a row. Paul began to shout his warning as soon as they came into view. A frightened family came out and stood in the moonlight on their lawn, watching us ride by. There was a young child resting his head against his mother’s hip, and a father who stood by protectively, holding a musket in his arms.

In front of one of the other houses, a boy of about nineteen rushed outside and quickly mounted a bay stallion. The bay stallion ears snapped forward as he and his rider joined us. He nickered softly to me and said, "You're a brave little filly this night!" Together, we galloped at least another fifteen miles,

crying out our warnings to everyone we found on our path, hoping they would help spread the news as well.

Then, suddenly, we were out of luck.

A clan of redcoats blocked our way. I remember the thought of jumping the cruel men but knew better. The redcoats scowled at us and shook their heads. "Whoa!" one officer ordered.

"Don't even think about running." Another added. "You've been warning people of us, you can't anymore. Dismount."

"Wait one moment. How do you know it was I?" Paul inquired.

"We heard your shouts off in the distance." One officer replied in a deep accent. "Dismount."

Paul dismounted gripping the reins tightly. I planted my legs to the earth and locked my legs tightly. I was not about to leave Paul.

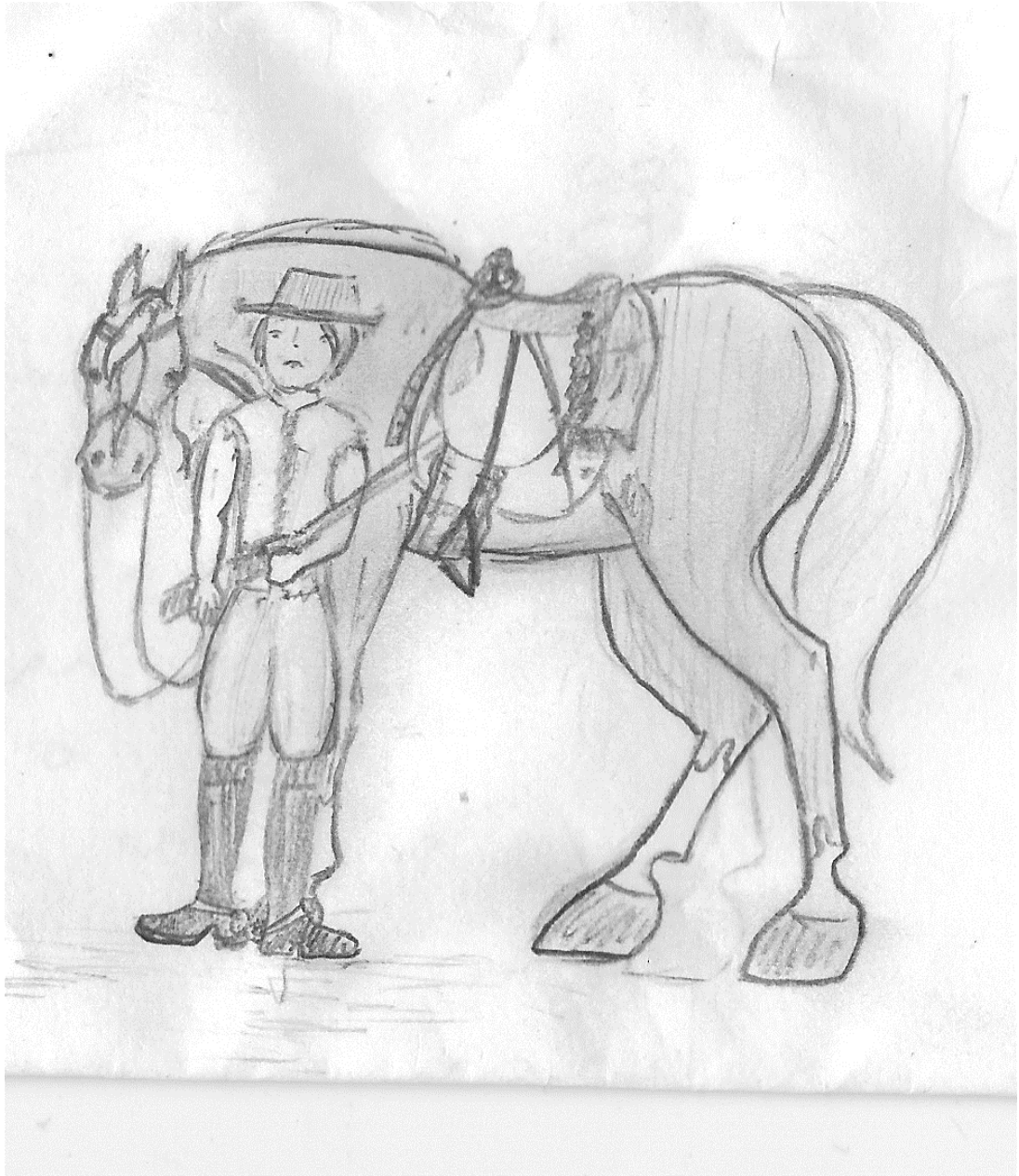
"Hand over your horse!" A red coat shouted.

Paul turned toward me. "I shall miss you dearly Brown Beauty." Paul declared. "Do the British well." I stuck out my muzzle and nudged him in the shoulder.

"Don't worry Beauty, for we have won our greatest battle yet. We have sacrificed ourselves to warn the people of Lexington. If you ever receive the chance to escape for a better life do it. Now off you go old girl."

A mounted British soldier walked his strawberry roan horse toward me and snatched my reins. A red coat mounted me and urged me into a trot. I remembered Paul's very last words to me and obeyed the British. I quickly looked back to catch my last glimpse of Paul Revere walking back toward Lexington.

THE END.



The Eye of the Horse

By Ruth Quinn, aged 11

Melbourne, Australia

The eye of the horse shone like a ball of fire in the hazy war light, as she raced into battle for the first and last time. She had trained for this moment for 12 tireless months, but nothing in her training compared to this rampaged, bombed out war scene and it had only just begun.

Her rider sat lightly on her back, his soft hands and calm voice soothed her every time a gunshot rang or a bomb hit, every time a rider fell to the ground and a horse ran away to the sidelines with the other steeds from both sides of the war. Horses always ran together, the hate between their riders never flowed through them, they ran as a herd, away from the smell of gore and death, the smell of their friends' blood and shattered bones and their trusted mounts' lifeless bodies. Few horses liked war and those that did had been ruined by it. The only thing that drove the horses on was the trust they held in their humans and the need for it to all to be over, and Sasha was going to make sure there was never another war again.

At least 50 had fallen, of human and horse, but Sasha was determined for no more to die. The soft hands of her rider guided her through motionless bodies on the bloodstained ground, through the destruction, and the terrified screams and whinnies of the injured and dying beasts. More and more doctors came out and risked their lives to save the injured soldiers and steeds. Every second, death swallowed some innocent body, taken away from family and friends and forced to fight for their country in a never to return war.

Riders dropped from horses, slung in the saddle and then slowly falling to the reddened earth. And horses tripped and stumbled until they dropped. Dead. This war was a guaranteed death sentence for more than most but Sasha knew she had to change that now.

She raced before the frontline, her rider barely remaining in the saddle with the rush of speed she galloped with. She knew she wasn't obeying him, but she had to do this. His hands tugged at her mouth, and she sensed the fear flowing through him. She didn't blame him, because racing through all the bullets of war was very scary.

Mouths dropped open and guns clattered to the ground as she reared with the power of life at hand. Silence had fallen, and for the first time in months, no gunshots rang through the valley. Now every living thing was looking at her with wide eyes and gaped mouths. Her nobility, life, and hatelessness had brought peace over the crowded valley. She had stopped war at last.

THE END.



SAVING FAITH

By Kaylea Barrow

Calgary, Alta. Canada

“Toot toot”, we had just boarded the huge ship, and it ready to depart for the Great War. While I was cooped up in a little stall below deck, I wondered why I was being shipped across the ocean and also what my job was going to be. All I was hoping for was that the soldier who I would be assigned to would be warm hearted. The ship was steady for three days, however on the last day the ship was tossed like a toy in a turbulent tub. The bruising on my sides was caused by all the thrashing around in the heavy seas.

When I got to the army camp, the horse trainer who was in charge of the war horses said that I needed extra training. Unfortunately he was too strict and mean, and was probably home sick for his family back in Canada. The soldier who I called master was no better, he didn’t love me or take care of me.

Thank goodness the stable boy loved me, through all of this challenging training, he sang to me and took extra care to make sure I was healthy and content. During our rides, he told me that his name was Johnny. I nickered that my name was Faith.

As soon as my training was finished, I left Johnny to go to the front line of the hazardous war. The grey sky hid the angry clouds, while the gun shots pierced my ears. I thought I would never hear again. Hating this experience, I wondered what would be next.

I was mortified at all the fallen soldiers. Boom!! After the weight on my back lightened, I looked behind me and realized my rider had been shot. Later I was taken by a soldier to a safe place and he let me know that I would assigned a new rider.

“Hello again,” blurted my favorite person in the whole war. It was Johnny! As he smiled at me, he reassured me that we would be friends forever, promising to take care of me.

The war was scary but Johnny was like a guardian angel to me. In this war there was hate, anger, sadness but with Johnny there was happiness, kindness, and love in my world. He was everything to me, and he made my life worth living.

The next three years of war were devastating, but with Johnny, the time went faster. Finally the captain informed us that the war had been won. I was overjoyed when Johnny wanted me saying that I would retire and live with his Canadian family.

“Choo choo” I took a train home with Johnny. He revealed that he had three children, named Johnny, Leah and Lila. He shared that they lived on a farm, and his children loved animals especially horses.

“DAD!!!! You’re finally home” said Leah as they hugged and kissed.

“Thank you for bringing us a new friend! Can I ride her please daddy? Does she go fast or slow or does she listen to me? Can I brush her hair daddy, and daddy can I take care of you? I love you daddy I missed you so much, I missed you, I thought of you every day. Don’t ever go away again. I couldn’t live another year without you,” said Lila. When Johnny’s wife embraced him, I thought she would never let him go. I knew I was home.

THE END



Epilogue

We hope you enjoyed reading these beautifully crafted war horse stories written by our young writing participants from our 2014 International Writing Competition! As we move forward in time we wish to never forget of the dedicated services of the horse for humankind. Although it appears today in the eyes of many we have lost our connection to the horse, Voice For The Horse believes we may need them more than ever. Our wars of today have only escalated in intensity. However the forces who stand strong to fight back against those whose objective and goal it is of hurting others, are growing stronger too.

On October 10th, 2012 within our own community, we lost the life of a beautiful girl who could no longer handle the bullying from some of those around her to include a very serious “cyber space stalker”. Within 24 hours after the passing of Amanda Todd, inspired by our Mascot Team Angel and Mischief, we wrote the Message From The Horse.



Message From The Horse

We know who you are, we see right through you. We have been with you since the beginning of time and still seek to be with you, and in some cases, still seek to find you. We understand far more than what you may ever believe as we do not have your ego to contend with, as we are only here in the moment.

We have fought your wars, carried you to battle, and when you feared for your life, we did not; we carried on to fulfill the task we had been given, to win your war.

Your wars of today are much more complex. They no longer are only against each other to win land and governments, they are to have power and control over another, to include destinies.

In the natural world I exist, I may fight for my herd only to preserve our unity. I may win or I may lose but this is a natural instinct gifted to us to survive in this world as horse. We know those of you who elect to have power over another are lacking and there is no fault here, it is only about choices and what it is you have learned.

You can change your choices any moment you choose to, and in the case of those who have chosen to become the bully, have the full opportunity to make this amend. If you ever begin to understand you have the choice to change, and become the person you were meant to be, we honour this and invite you to play with us in our playground.

We Know Who We Are

Voice For The Horse

Delivered October 11th, 2012

“We believe in horses, we believe in the power within them, much stronger than most would know of. We believe their bigger job out of any service they may ever provide for humankind, would be to promote peace. We commit to you at Voice For The Horse our dedicated teachings to children, reinforcing to them they are STRONG and can handle any strikes which may be made towards, and against them”.

Voice For The Horse



Message From The Founder

With a heart for philanthropy combined with a deep love and affinity for horses, myself and a team of inspired music artists have stepped up to the plate to fulfill a dream which was founded by our originating project *Voice For The Horse* in 2007. Today, we have evolved into *Horses Help Kids* whereby our aim is through equine inspired music productions, we will engage many youth in our our Signature Program the *Leading The Change Music Project For Kids*; a creative youth based global initiative to support humanity.

Today, more than ever we see nationwide the need to go back to our grassroots, and who better than a *Horse* could take us there! And we must start with our new generations coming forward, for they will be our leaders of tomorrow.

A favorite quote of mine by Margaret Mead:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

The quote above is how we originated, with the sole attempt and vision that we *could* change the world for better. With *Horse* to accompany us into our future, we believe this to be true.

Yvonne Allen

www.horseshelpkids.com





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