



****Ripley's Horse Aid Foundation****
www.freewebs.com/rhaf

A Neglect Prevention Charity

Why is RHAF here?

Animal cruelty is a real issue within Washington State. Enough so, that in 2005 codes were upgraded to include gross neglect and/or cruelty as a Class C Felony. Washington Animal Cruelty Codes are some of the best in the US and yet, very little progress is being made to resolve the problems faced by hundreds of horses (equines) in our counties. Even though horses and their fellow equines are classified as livestock, they rarely serve any purpose other than personal pleasure.

The most common reasons for equine neglect are death within the family, loss of a job, medical problems such as cancer, an injury, etcetera as well as the declining capabilities of the elderly; and divorce. Another area that results in lack of proper health care is first time owners that have admired and dreamed of owning a horse but have no experience to give proper care.

The least frequent cause of neglect is the deliberate withholding of needed care and collectors that do not have the funds for proper care but choose to have animals regardless of their ability

Animal Control Agencies

All cities and counties respond to possible neglect calls. The action taken by the responding officer may vary from county to county especial-

ly when dealing with equines and there are two areas that an officer must take into consideration.

First is what type of situation the prosecuting attorney is willing to take to court. It is very time consuming for an officer to build a case that will stand up in court therefore, the officer will not take time on those that will not pass the prosecutor's criteria.

Second is budget. It is very expensive for local governments to seize and care for all the possible needs required by an equine suffering from lack of care. It may take months for a case to go to trial and all necessary medical and daily care becomes the tax payer's responsibility. If the owner is found guilty of the charges financial reimbursement for the total cost of the care is unlikely.

Another area that plays a part in what changes an owner is required to make to improve conditions is the knowledge the responding officer has on equine needs.

Equine Rescues and/or Foster Care

Each equine care facility works differently. Some work with AC agencies and may require full financial compensation for taking care of seized equines and others might require a one time intake fee.

Depending on the general public's economical situation it is sometimes very difficult to find new homes for those in these facilities. This then becomes a new issue as the facilities become full and are unable to take in new neglect cases.

Foot Note:

The beast-of-burden has been an essential part of man's existence for six thousand years. Yes, 6,000 years. The donkey (the descendant of the African ass) is the oldest domestic beast of burden; it is believed to have been domesticated in Egypt by c.4000 BC. The most common date given for the horse's domestication and use as a means of transport, is c. 2000 BC.

It is only in today's society that their value to

man has diminished so low that it is becoming common to find owners not taking the time to understand the basic care needed or they choose not to give it; that results in needless pain and suffering.

What is RHAF?

Ripley's Horse Aid Foundation is an all volunteer 501-C-3 charity. It is not a rescue. It is a neglect prevention organization that creates and implements innovative programs that fill the holes in the community's equine safety net. It provides short term assistance to equines in need and promotes owner responsibility, thus reducing the number of equines needing rescue services.

How RHAF helps?

Ripley's HAF allows an animal control officer the ability to address lack of care in its early stages. RHAF also has educational information available on equine basic care so owners have a very clear understanding of what their animals need to have for a healthy and safe life.

"Hay 4 Horses" AC Vouchers

The services for this program are extensive and reach the animals in need of basic health care via Animal Control Agencies. These vouchers are issued to owners at the Officer's discretion; one or all of the free services can be selected for each equine.

When funds are depleted for the program, the Animal Control Agencies are informed not to issue any more vouchers. This program is not only a tool for Animal Control Agencies to be more effective under the WA State Cruelty Codes, it also reaches out to good owners in temporary financial duress.

Due to the serious nature of a horse in need, this program is on a pager system and a service dispatcher responds to calls quickly. Within one to 24 hours arrangements are made to provide

the services requested by the Animal Control Officer. A voucher may include one or all of the services based on the Officer's evaluation of the needs of each animal at the location. The services available are 300 pounds of hay per average size animal, one 50-pound bag of feed supplement, hoof trim, teeth float, castration, euthanasia and carcass removal.

This program also provides a knowledgeable volunteer onsite service provider that works directly with the owner on health care and helps the owner realistically evaluate their ability to continue proper care in future.

A recipient of a voucher is eligible for an additional voucher by reducing their herd by 50%. By doing so, the owner qualifies for a second assist of 600 pounds of hay and two 50-pound bags of feed per average size equine for each of the remaining herd.

Because the voucher program relies on WA equine rescues or foster facilities to take possession of equines in our program when applicable, there are short-term services that can follow the equine into these facilities if needed.

Education

"Cause & Effect" is a comprehensive publication that gives a clear understanding on the necessary care required by equines. Lack of this care can cause life threatening health issues and avoidable pain and suffering. The information within this booklet has been provided by the American Association of Equine Practitioners and their Educational Partners, Bayer Animal Health and Purina Mills, as well as other professional authorities in the equine industry.

Topics are:

- Safe and Healthy Environment
- Fencing
- Hazards
- Shelter
- Stables
- Feed and Water
- Effective Parasite Control

- Skin Problems and Diseases
- Colic
- Dental Care
- Immunization
- Expectant Mare
- Foal Growth
- Stallions and Geldings
- Older Horse
- Donkeys
- Mules
- Miniatures
- No Foot - No Horse
- Restraining Equines
- Exhaustion and Overheating
- Body Condition Evaluation
- Emergency Care Guidelines
- Euthanasia

How YOU can help

Equine neglect has been an issue for decades. It is now becoming a more frequent occurrence. Those animals that are suffering from neglect have no choice but you do. So, be part of the solution.

1) Report Neglect If you suspect neglect report it to your Animal Control Agency. Give a description of the animal and the street address where it is located. Do not approach the owner yourself. Ask for a follow up report.

2) Volunteer Only law enforcement has the power to put an equine owner on notice that they must improve the care they give to their animals. With the voucher the officer is giving the owner the ability to make the needed changes right away. Volunteers are necessary to do fundraising in the participating counties to keep this program active. Just a few hours a year of your time can make the difference for a suffering animal. Many hands make light work and yours are needed.

3) Donations are tax deductible and a donation of any size will make a difference. RHAF's programs have surpassed our expectation as they have been 100% successful. The average

cost per assisted equine is \$200 which includes extended care into a placement facility. The cost to the county on confiscations can run into the thousands.

4) Networking If you are unable to assist with this valuable program, please pass the information along to others.

Additional Services

"Ready 4 Adoption"

www.freewebs.com/wser

"Horses Needing New Homes"

www.freewebs.com/horseforadoption

"Disaster Relief"

"Emergency Feed 4 WA Rescues"

"Art 4 Horses"

www.freewebs.com/art4horses

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To Start the program in your County

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<<< **On Behalf of the Horse** >>>

* * * * Thank You * * * *

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