



horse bits

St. Francis Horse Rescue's Quarterly Newsletter

Volume One

Number Two

Summer 2007

St. Francis Horse Rescue & Retirement Farm, Inc. is a non-profit organization which provides a quality home for any horse, pony, donkey or mule in need of a safe place to stay, medical care, or a retirement home to live out their days with respect and loving attention.

Adoptable animals will be placed in qualified excellent homes only.

It began in 1999 as a hobby farm owned by Bill and Mary Hetzel, purchased to house their four horses. After a short while, they recognized the need to take in horses that people were unable, or unwilling, to keep for a variety of reasons. It was clear to them that some of the horses would be staying here permanently due to advanced age, extensive medical problems or serious behavioral issues. There are 27 acres, mostly fenced for pasture, capable of housing 30 horses at any given time. As of June 9, 2004 the farm has been recognized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Francis of Assisi has a special meaning to the Hetzels, and his love of God's creatures guides them forward.

Visitors are welcome, by appointment only. Call us at (715) 592-6622 Monday through Saturday from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm. On Sunday it's emergencies only.



Famous Budweiser Clydesdales demonstrating how to "dock" a wagon. (Lauren Omernik photo)

“Oh, dear, what can the matter be...Johnny’s so long at the fair.”

These words from a memorable old song are surely true if Johnny has gone to the Midwest Horse Fair! Held each year at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, Wisconsin, the Horse Fair is an all-equine extravaganza that includes clinics, demonstrations, performances, and shopping. My mom, brother, and I went to the Horse Fair for the first time this year, and it was incredible! A quick

by Lauren Omernik

glance through the program was enough to show us that it would be no ordinary Saturday.

We watched many of the breed demonstrations that were held in the Coliseum throughout the day. I was impressed by the variety of jobs that each breed could do. There might be a horse doing Western reining patterns in one corner, while another horse of the same breed proudly displayed dressage movements, and at the same time, yet another horse cantered swiftly over jumps. It was a great chance to see the talents and versatility of many different breeds.

We were also able to watch a Liberty Presentation. Several horses of different breeds were turned loose, one at a time,

in the Coliseum arena, where they galloped around exuberantly. It was a very neat sight! The horses looked quite happy about having a chance to be out of their stalls for awhile.

I was very excited when I read that the Budweiser Clydesdales would be performing at the fair. Our seats were in the lowest section of the Coliseum, so we had a great view when the six majestic Clydesdales boldly pranced in. They performed several different maneuvers, one of which was known as the “swing dock.” The team backed up on command, until the beer wagon they were towing was even with the makeshift “loading dock” of the announcer’s booth. The horses then proceeded to swing around all the way to the left without moving the wagon! They repeated this feat on the right side, to the cheers of the crowd.

(Continued on page 3)

Four horse team pulling a covered wagon during the Haflinger breed demonstration. (Lauren Omernik photo)



Message From Our President

Mary Hetzel



Hello everyone – this sure is a busy time of the year here at the SFHR! Adoptions are happening and spring clean up is underway. If you are looking for a new horse or know of someone who is, please check out our adoptables on our website. We have some very nice horses available at this time and they are waiting for their forever homes.

Our big spring event was the Midwest Horse Fair in Madison in April. It was so good to see old friends and make some new friends and just enjoy being at this huge event. It's a joy to see the thrill on the faces of those who were attending their first horse fair! We received compliments on our booth (thanks Cowboy Doug) and managed to enlighten a few folks on what horse rescue is (and what it isn't) and my e-mail inbox was flooded for weeks afterwards from interested people. Fantastic!

We raffled off a donated Peruvian saddle and a hand made saddle rack. This brought in much needed funds for the rescue and we are grateful for that as we had spring shots and coggins tests to pay for. That has all been completed at this time. We have a wonderful assortment of items for sale to benefit the rescue on our website gift shop. Please visit www.stfranchorserescue.org whenever you get a chance.

Sponsorship is going well and you can also read more about that on our website. It is a great way to connect with that special horse without even having to be at the rescue.

We have some wonderful volunteers but we are always looking for more to help out during the week. If

you have some time and wish to spend it helping the horses, just drop me an e-mail at horserescue@coredcs.com or call us at 715-592-6622 and we will welcome you with open arms, believe me!

Have a wonderful summer and I hope only good things come your way. Happy Trails!!

Meet Our Volunteers

It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to keep St. Francis Horse Rescue operating if it weren't for our volunteers. Not only do they perform "housekeeping" tasks around the grounds, they feed, water, groom, and care for the animals.

Dreams Do Come True!

by Karen Casey



For some people, the love for horses grows over time. I truly believe my daughter Courtney was born loving animals.

When she was only three years old her dad took her for a pony ride. He was totally unaware of what he started...horse fever. At least once a year after that we had to

take her someplace that offered riding so she could get on a horse and get her fill for the time being.

Her dream was to own a horse someday.

Then, last year in seventh grade, she had to work at a nonprofit organization for one of her classes at school. That's when she discovered the Saint Francis website.

Once she worked the hours she needed for school, she continued to want to be out there. She cleaned stalls by herself at times, and of course spent time learning all the horses' names, which didn't take very long.

Going out to the rescue and volunteering became a family weekend ritual, as well as visiting the website daily.

Courtney, of course, kept dreaming of having a horse. She started watching the adoptables page and when she saw Gaston's picture she was set on getting him, even though she never saw him in "person." He was a 10 year old Pintabian gelding and hardly ridden.

Jay talked to Mary at the rescue about everything

SFHR Officers

Mary Hetzel: President

Bill Hetzel: Vice-President

Board of Directors

Mitch Attoe, Michelle Lippert, Julie Stiles, Doug Watson

Publication Deadlines

Issue	Deadline	Mailing
Fall	August 15	Sept. 1
Winter	November 15	Dec. 1
Spring	February 15	March 1
Summer	May 15	June 1

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involved. Mary made an affordable agreement and we signed the contract on July 11, 2006. Gaston became a member of our family. Part of the agreement we have with Mary is that Courtney work at the rescue at least once a week, which is never a problem.

One of Courtney's goals was to show Gaston at a horse show. She took him to a show at Heartland in March and placed 6th. Courtney was just thrilled.

Our younger daughter Kimberly had to join her sister. She started to take horseback riding lessons. She still has a lot to learn but she is working on it. In November 2006 we adopted Rayne, a 3 year-old Appaloosa mare. Both Kimberly and Rayne are young but they will eventually become a team.

Gaston and Rayne are a part of the family and we have grown to love them. We have learned a lot of things about horses that we did not know and we are still learning.

Volunteering at the rescue is not hard work. Yes you might have to clean 13 stalls, carry in water from the outside pump because the inside one is frozen, dump out the "milkduds" from the water buckets (White Rain is blind but has a good aim), drain hoses in the winter, feed the horses, sweep the barn, fill the water troughs and clean the pastures. It's all worth it when you know you can spend time with the horses after "work."

Our family has grown closer since we've been spending time at Saint Francis Horse Rescue. We have met and become friends with Mary and Bill and other volunteers. Its where our heart is.

Mitch's Clinics

Mitch Attoe's horse training clinic, "Respect from the Ground" was held on March 17, 2007 at Mitch and Kathy's facility on Rustic Drive in Rosholt. It was small but well attended and a great time was had by all. Mitch makes horse training look easy and fun and was more than happy to answer all questions asked. We also had a great lunch!!

His next clinic will be held on June 16th beginning at 10 a.m. at their facility and we hope to see you all there! Mitch will feature a young rescue horse with an amazing story "Wanna Be a Shining Star" (Bee) who has been adopted and is being trained by Mitch for Sue and Brian! See "Upcoming Events" in this issue.



Kimi Casey tells about her experiences at St. Francis while Cowboy Doug looks on. (Photo courtesy of Melissa Onsager.)

HORSE FAIR

(Continued from page 1)

The "swing dock" certainly showed how intelligent and well trained the Clydesdales are.

Another display which really impressed me was the Roman Riding performed with the Priefert Texas Thunder Percherons. Seeing this gave a whole new meaning to the idea of "extreme sports." The four huge black horses were connected only by reins in sets of two. The last two horses carried a rider, who stood with one leg on the back of each as they galloped at breathtaking speed around the arena. Though the show lasted only a few minutes, it was amazing!

The demonstrations and performances were great, and so was the shopping. The four shopping halls were filled to overflowing with a dazzling array of horse related items. Anything you could imagine needing for horses could be found, from blankets and halters to stable supplies and tack. Of course, there were plenty of goodies for horse loving people as well, such as clothing, jewelry,

and home décor.

The Midwest Horse Fair is something that really has to be seen to be believed. If you weren't able to go this year, don't worry! It takes place next year on April 18, 19, and 20, and I'm sure it will be just as exciting.

Adoptable Horses

For a list of the horses currently available for adoption check our website: www.stfrancishorserescue.org

Noel

Noel is a 16 hand black grade Thoroughbred mare, just 10 years old. She suffered a back/stifle injury and has since recovered but is still lame at the canter. She is good at the walk though and would make a wonderful trail horse as she has a calm disposition. A very nice mare with an adoption fee of just \$500.

Shiloh

Quarterhorse, Paint/Pinto mix, 4 years old, gelding, 14.2 hands.

Rodeo

Paint/Pinto, 15 years old, gelding, 15 hands.

Chipper

Saddlebred mix, 21 years old, gelding, 14.2 hands.

Noble Poco Gabriel "Poco"

Paso Fino, 20 years old, gelding, 14 hands.

Brey Zippy Sandy "Tigger"

Paint/Pinto, 7 years old, gelding, 14.2 hands.

The Cool Sweep "Charlie"

Quarterhorse, 10 years old, gelding, 16.2 hands.

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Where Are They Now?

Lisa Howley's Willy



Willy was donated to the farm by his owner because of trust issues. He was diagnosed with photosensitivity, a condition of the eyes that causes violent shaking of his head when summer sunlight goes through the eye to the optic nerves. To correct his disorder he has to wear a special mask on his eyes (like an adapted fly mask) to shield the sun for three months of the summer.

Willy's adoption is a unique story. When I looked at him, I didn't think much of him, he was just another horse at the farm, and I had my eye on another horse. It was not until the Midwest Horse Fair of 2005 that something pulled me toward Willy. His picture was in a book that contained all of the other available horses. As people walked by they would flip through the book. When Willy's page was up, the people would stop and

take special interest in this gorgeous horse asking about his story. What I realized during this time was that I didn't want anybody else to have him. Throughout the three days of the fair, I sat silent when his page came up and prayed that no one would take a particular interest in him.

When I got home on Sunday night, I explained to my mom (the same person who said that I would never get a horse because it's "too much responsibility") that I found my horse. I told her that I wanted to adopt Willy for my 16th birthday present. All she said was she had to discuss it with Mary. For about two months I didn't know if my mom had talked to her or not. On June 9th, 2005, I went and spent my birthday with Willy. When I was finished riding, I went up to the house and waiting for me were guests, a cake, and a ribbon that fits a horse's neck saying "Sweet 16, I love my horse Willy." My mom and I went down to the barn and took pictures of me and my new horse!

Today, Willy is still as gorgeous as can be and doing very well. Just this last August I took my senior pictures with him and he did wonderful. His trust issues are being resolved and he loves to please.

Upcoming Events

June 16--Mitch's Clinic

"Safety on and Around Your Horse, and Choosing the Right Horse for You" clinic by Mitch Attoe beginning at 10 am. \$15. M bar K Foundation Quarter Horses, 7619 Rustic Drive, Rosholt, Wis. Info: attmen@hotmail.com. (715) 592-4540.

June 29, 30, July 1--Rodeo

Manawa Mid-Western Rodeo. Friday, June 29 (7:30), Saturday, June 30 (2:00 and 7:30), Sunday, July 1 (2:00). Parade Saturday (10:30). To order tickets call (800) 747-6336. Check their website for more information: www.manawarodeo.org.