

Over 100 horses rescued in last seven years

by Jim Morrow and Terri Shobbrook

"I want to bring awareness to what happens to horses when they go to auction," says Dale Stone owner operator of Rocking Horse Ranch in Big Baddeck. "80% of them go to kill buyers."

On any given Wednesday evening, in an auction barn in Cranbury, New Jersey up to 50 horses are destined to be sent to Canada for slaughter.

Horses of all kinds end up in the New Jersey auction. Many are not purchased during the auction and end up in the hands of the kill buyer, destined for a Canadian or Mexican slaughterhouse where they will be killed for human consumption in foreign markets, mainly Europe and Japan.

They are horses of all breeds, ages, and sizes.

There are foals too young to be separated from their mothers, riding horses and racehorses that did not run fast enough in their last race. There are draft horses who worked hard pulling families on sleigh rides, or working the fields



Dale Stone of Rocking Horse Ranch and rescued thoroughbred Jersey who was about to be slaughtered because she could not breed.

pulling plows or carriages in New York's Central Park. Some are in need of tender loving care and rehabilitation but the vast majority of horses that ended up in the kill pen are in "mint" condition.

Some of these horses were simply discarded by their owners, some sold unknowingly to an unscrupulous kill buyer, and some are stolen from their homes, while others are uncaringly traded in for a younger, faster, stronger model. These horses are all callously discarded. In the kill pen, their names are discarded too. There they are only known by the slaughter tag number pasted on their hindquarters.

Only through the compassion of the auction barn owner, are these horses

given until Saturday noon to find new homes. Ten of these horses found homes in Nova Scotia – one on the mainland and the rest on Cape Breton Island.

Already in 2010 over 10 horses have made the long journey from New Jersey to Cape Breton Island. One, a beautiful 6 year old thoroughbred gelding, was delivered to Reaching Strides Equestrian Centre in Antigonish, two Belgian draft mares went to Seaweed and Sod Farm on Boularderie Island and the rest were delivered into the loving hands of Dale Stone, owner of Rocking Horse Ranch and Rehabilitation Centre.

Horse slaughter was banned in the United States in 2007, but the transport of US horses for slaughter was not. As a

result, in 2009, more than 100,000 American horses were brought to Canada for slaughter, in addition to countless Canadian horses, and were killed in foreign owned abattoirs, the largest located in Ft. McLeod, Alberta, while smaller facilities exist in Ontario and Quebec.

Once at Rocking Horse Ranch, Ms. Stone rehabilitates the horses when needed, feeds and cares for them and tries to find secure homes where a buy-back agreement must be made before any horse leaves the stable. Ms. Stone vows that none of the horses in her care will ever have to go back to auction.

Over the last seven years Ms. Stone has re-homed over 100 animals. She has already found homes for four of the most recent arrivals.

Library Hours

Hours of operation for the Baddeck branch of the Cape Breton Regional Library, located at the Baddeck Fire Hall, are as follows:

Tuesday: Noon - 5 pm & 6 - 8 pm
Wednesday: Noon - 5 pm & 6 - 8 pm
Thursday: Noon - 5 pm & 6 - 8 pm
Friday: 10 am - 5 pm
Saturday: 10 am - 5 pm

Hours of operation for the Victoria North Regional Library in North Ingonish are as follows:

Tuesday: noon - 5 pm & 6 - 8 pm
Wednesday: noon - 5 pm & 6 - 8 pm
Thursday: noon - 5 pm & 6 - 8 pm
Friday: 9 am - noon & 1 - 5 pm
Saturday: 10 am - noon, & 1 - 5 pm

The library personnel at all branches welcome your enquiries. Call Baddeck at 295-2055 and Ingonish at 285-2544.

Bookmobile Schedule

Wednesday, April 21: Cape Smokey School (11:15-11:45 am), Cabot High School (12:15-12:45 pm), Neil's Harbour at the Highland Manor (2-2:30 pm), White Point (2:45-3 pm), Smelt Brook (3:15-3:45 pm), Dingwall at Church (4:15-4:45 pm).

Thursday, April 22: North Highlands School (10-11:30 am), Bay St. Lawrence Community Centre (Noon-12:30 pm), Cape North (2-2:30 pm).

Wednesday, April 28: Wagmatcook School (9:15-11 am), Wagmatcook Senior School (11:15 am-Noon), Little Narrows-Ferry (1:30-2 pm), Hazeldale (2:15-2:30 pm), Washabuck Community Hall (3-3:30 pm).

Thursday, April 29: Rankin School (10-11:30 am), Barra Glen (Noon-12:15 pm), Jamesville at Dunn Road (1:45-2:15 pm), MacKinnon's Harbour (2:30-3 pm), Ottawa Brook (3:15-3:30 pm).



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