



Horses Need Your Voice

There is good news for horses! President Obama has signed the budget into law, and it does not allow funds for the inspection of slaughter plants that kill horses for human consumption; therefore, no plants can be opened. That is a great victory; however, it appears that this outcome will not eliminate the continuing operation of plants that slaughter horses for animal food. Nor, does it eliminate the transport of horses to Canada or Mexico to be slaughtered for human consumption. Thus, the issue of horse slaughter itself and transport to slaughter is still front and center in New York State, especially since New York is a gateway to Canada. We must continue to work to pass NYS bills A3905 and S4615. Not only would the proposed legislation prevent horse slaughter from gaining a foothold in our state, but also, it would prohibit the current practice of transporting horses across the state for the purpose of slaughter in Canada.

These bills failed last year. Why? Because they were not allowed out of the Assembly's and Senate's Agriculture and Markets Committees. Why? Because it appears that some members of the legislature have been persuaded to believe that any legislation to protect farm animals from cruelty will result in the proverbial "slippery slope." They believe that slope would lead to all NYS residents becoming vegans, and as a result, the NYS dairy and meat industries would be



destroyed. It is difficult to imagine that a bill aimed solely at protecting horses would be perceived as a path to economic ruin for the entire agriculture industry.

Currently, the horses being shipped to Canada through New York come from auction houses in New York and Pennsylvania that sell them to "kill buyers." These individuals purchase horses and transport them to Canadian slaughter houses that subsequently sell the horse meat to foreign countries. From the time these animals are hauled to auction to the time they are brutally slaughtered, the atrocities they are subjected to are so pervasive and unspeakable that anyone with a modicum of compassion would be completely revolted and sickened.

So, where do these horses that start down this tragic path come from? Based on conversations we have had with those who own small family farms – not from them. These farmers are as opposed to horse slaughter as any animal advocate is. When these small farmers have a horse that needs to be "put down," they call a veterinarian and have the horse euthanized. Then, they either bury the animal on their property or arrange to have the carcass removed. They care enough to do the right thing by an animal who has served them well.

So where *are* these horses coming from? They are coming from various sources that treat these animals as though they were inanimate commodities. They come from breeding farms that breed horses continuously to produce a prize-winning thoroughbred -- a new champion they hope will win the Triple Crown. The ones who don't measure-up are disposed of at auction. They are joined there by horses from race tracks across the state. Those horses who fail to win again and again are simply rejected as "losers." To avoid openly flaunting NYRA's so-called ban on owners' sending horses to slaughter, they are clandestinely sold and transported to auctions where kill buyers purchase them. These unfortunate horses also come from various dude ranches and road-side carnivals. At the end of the season, the owners of

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President's Message

Humane education is mandated in New York schools for all elementary students, but it is not promoted or enforced. Yet, we live in an age where bullying is a major concern, and humane education can be part of the solution. Teaching kindness to animals also teaches larger concepts such as responsibility, compassion, environmental awareness, generosity, empathy -- a small list of character traits that make students better adults.

We must talk to our teachers, administrators, and school boards to ensure this mandate is adhered to. Find someone inside your local system who will be an ally, and persevere. Perseverance recently saved some puppy mill dogs chained outside in sub-zero temperatures in upstate NY from a continuing life -- or death -- in horrific conditions, but who failed to teach their owner that this was not acceptable? If we push for small steps to be taken in our education system, larger ones will follow.

We can't give up. We are the voice for the animals, and we need to be ever watchful about legal changes that benefit a few people but hurt animals. There is now a bill pending which would require the teaching of hunting and fishing in our physical education classes. Why? To get kids outdoors? Why not hiking, biking, golf? With the history of violence in our schools, why put more firearms in the hands of children who do not yet have the emotional or academic resources to make good choices? Why desensitize them further by encouraging the killing of innocent creatures for sport?

As difficult as it is to be aware of the endless stories of cruelty we are confronted with every day, it is crucial to educate ourselves and others, stay on track, and reach out to everyone we can, whenever we can, to stop the bad news. We cannot control such things as the weather this winter, but we can make a difference for animals if we persevere.

As always, for the animals,
Laura-Ann Cammisa

Dear Friends of NYSHA:

In addition to sending you our newsletter, we would like to keep in touch with you by occasional emails on timely topics -- legislative alerts, for example. If you would like to be added to our email list or update an email address we already have, please use the email address line on the enclosed card. While we are very grateful for donations, please feel free to return the card with or without a donation. And, we promise you we will not inundate you with emails or give your email address to any other organization.

Thank you.

NYSHA's Calendar

Investigating Animal Cruelty Workshops -- Please check our website -- nyshumane.org -- for further information as it becomes available for our 2014 workshop schedule.

Humane Lobby Day -- Check our website for information for this April 9 event in Albany.

Myths and Realities of Horse Slaughter -- Seminar on April 16, 6 -- 8 PM, at Hudson Valley Community College's Bulmer Telecommunications Center Auditorium in Troy. Visit NYSHA's website for additional information about seminar.

NYS Animal Advocacy Day (4th Annual) -- Join us on May 28 in The Well in the Legislative Office Building in Albany. This bi-partisan event brings the public and members of the NYS Assembly and Senate together to further protect our companion animals from cruelty. More details on NYS Animal Advocacy Day Facebook page.

Spay/Neuter Awareness Month -- February. Encourage your friends to "fix" their pets. **World Spay Day** -- February 25. Watch for local events.

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month -- April.

Animal Control Officer Appreciation Week -- April 13 to 19.

To learn about additional NYSHA news and activities, please "Like" our Facebook Page -- New York State Humane Association. There is also a link to Facebook from our website. We do hope you will "Like" us.

nyshumane.org

Matching Grants

Have you checked to see if your workplace matches employee's donations to qualified organizations? If not sure, please ask your employer. You may be able to double your donation to NYSHA.

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Legislative Committee Update

January 8, 2014 kicked off the start of a new Legislative Session in New York State. Lawmakers will be in session from January to June working on bills and initiatives that will impact the residents of New York State. NYSHA has identified some key areas of focus for this year.

Despite recent positive developments at the Federal level to defund the inspection of horse meat for human consumption in the United States, our horses are still not protected from being sent to slaughter. Horses will continue to be shipped through a grueling and completely inhumane transport process only to be slaughtered in Canada or Mexico for human consumption overseas. Horses also continue to be slaughtered for other uses, such as to feed animals in zoos or other captive settings. NYSHA will continue to work on measures to protect horses, including strongly supporting (A3905 / S4615) which would ban horse slaughter in New York State and prohibit the transport of horses for slaughter.

In order to ensure better enforcement of the state's cruelty laws, NYSHA will continue fighting for critical legislation that would move the animal cruelty statutes from Agriculture and Markets Law into the Penal Law (A775). Presently, the majority of training for law enforcement personnel focuses on Penal and Criminal Procedure Law, not portions of Agriculture and Markets Law pertaining to cruelty to animals. Placing the anti-cruelty statutes under the Penal Law would

ensure a more intensive and detailed level of instruction than is currently available. This important bill would put animal related crimes on par with other criminal offenses, improve accessibility and understanding of animal crime statutes, and promote proper enforcement and prosecution of these crimes under the law.

It is just as important to fight against harmful legislation as it is to fight for passage of measures to improve conditions for animals. That is why NYSHA is opposed to S4904. This bill would require notification to the owners and/or operators of farms, when information about their farm operation has been requested via the Freedom of Information Law. This measure would make it more difficult for the public and advocacy groups to obtain information about food growing/producing operations in this state, including those maintaining animals. NYSHA will work to ensure that this bill is not passed and doesn't become law.

We will continue to keep our members updated regarding our efforts on behalf of the animals of New York State, as well as how you can help us to ensure that there is action on these critical measures during the 2014 Legislative Session.

If you wish to see more detailed information about these proposed laws, please visit our website – nyshumane.org. Click on Legislation in menu column.

A Great Victory for Horses – Slaughter for Human Consumption Stopped

As a result of the tireless efforts of Victoria McCullough and John Holland, President of Equine Welfare Alliance (EWA), horse slaughter for human consumption will not resume in the United States.

With key support from Vice-President Biden and Congressional leaders, the defunding language was put into the Omnibus Bill. As a result, there is no funding for inspections of horse slaughter facilities, and without inspections, horse slaughter for human consumption cannot be reinstated in the U.S.

“Victoria McCullough was the one who made this happen.” explains EWA President Holland. “It was the fact that Victoria, an accomplished international equestrian and CEO of Chesapeake Petroleum, was spending her own fortune without regard for any personal gain that I believe gave her the credibility to accomplish this.” McCullough in turn credited Holland for the wonderful and

informative materials that he had created to present to the officials which persuaded them to embrace this effort. They both credit Susan Wagner of Equine Advocates in Columbia County (NY) with the genesis of their combined effort. They were both speakers at the Horse Summit which Wagner hosted for the past two years. As a result of meeting there, they joined forces and have worked together since then to achieve this outcome.

McCullough expressed her gratitude to the many friends of horses in government who helped her achieve this goal, including VP Biden, Frank Biden, Florida State Senator Joseph Abruzzo, Sen. Tom Harkin (IA), Rep. Debbie

Wasserman Shultz (FL), Rep. Tom Rooney (FL), Senator Barbara Mikulski (MD), Senator Mark Kirk (IL), Senator Dick Durbin (IL), Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, HSUS's Jessica Feingold-Lieberson and many others.



FL State Senator Joseph Abruzzo and Victoria McCullough with Vice-President Joseph Biden in 2013.

Equine Advocates

Sullivan County Sheriff Hosts NYSHA Workshop

Because NYSHA's 2004 workshop in Sullivan Co. was so well received, we decided to return there to educate the many individuals who have since joined the law enforcement community and others who perform work related to that field.

The workshop was conducted at the Sullivan Co. Emergency Services Training Center in Swan Lake on September 10. The attendees represented a wide swath of professions: police officers, SUNY police, ADAs from several DA's Offices, representatives from the Attorney General's Office, humane law enforcement officers, probation officers, and representatives from humane organizations.

ADA Bonnie Mitzner from the Sullivan Co. DA's Office joined our usual roster of speakers and did an excellent job of engaging the attendees in a lively discussion of how animal cases in various areas are processed by police and DA's Offices.

It was a great workshop and our association with the Department of Criminal Justice Services is working out well. Their email blast allows the workshop notice to go across the entire



Patricia Valusek, NYSHA representative, and NYSP Inv. George Bird, workshop presenter, with representatives of Sullivan Co. Sheriff's Office.

state which has resulted in attracting attendees from as far away as Suffolk County and Niagara Falls.

We are currently planning our 2014 training calendar, so please check our website periodically for upcoming workshops.

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these businesses callously dispose of the very horses who have provided them with a livelihood during the warm months at the auction. After all, why care for them during the rest of the year when they can always get more horses at auction next spring.

It's reprehensible and immoral to allow these horses who have done nothing but serve humans, to be sold for slaughter. It is that simple. The honorable thing to do, if these horses are no longer needed, is for owners to act responsibly. First they should make an effort to find the horses homes, and if that is not possible, then have the animals humanely euthanized. Hauling them to auction to make a few dollars by selling them to kill buyers is not an acceptable way to treat these beautiful animals.

We citizens of this state need to make the members of the Agriculture and Markets Committees understand that preventing horse slaughter and transport to slaughter has nothing to do with a slippery-slope. It has everything to do with humaneness. New York should not continue to be a conduit for horse slaughter by proxy.

As Gandhi said, "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way in which its animals are

treated." By that measure, New York fails in regard to these magnificent animals. Horses helped build this country and have worked side-by-side with our military and law enforcement officers to protect our nation and our communities. They deserve better and we need to ensure that they receive it!

What you can do:

1. Write and call your state legislators and the Governor. Let them know you want them to support the anti-horse slaughter bill (A3905 / S4615). Tell them you do not want horse slaughter to ever begin in this state and you want the current horse transport for slaughter stopped. Other states have outlawed both, and New York needs to do so as well. Be a voice for horses, do it now. Find your NYS Assembly member at <http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/mem/> and your NYS Senator at <http://www.nysenate.gov/>.
2. Make copies of this newsletter article and have it available for distribution at your shelter or business and at events.
3. Support NYSHA in its work of lobbying for humane legislation and producing "Investigating Animal Cruelty" workshops.

Your Will Can Be Your Way...

Your will can be your way to continue helping animals after your lifetime. We are grateful that many of you have given NYSHA generous donations. If you also wish to remember NYSHA in your will, please ask your attorney to specify our official name and address as follows: New York State Humane Association, Inc., PO Box 3068, Kingston, NY 12402 • Federal ID Number 22-2238112