

Letters to the Editor

More Feedback on For the Love of Horses

To the Editor:

I was quite surprised to see the tone of the letter from Laura Aust-Olkin regarding slaughterhouses. Not in her backyard? How big is her backyard?

How does she think this works? Does she think the horses are lovingly loaded onto trailers with dividers, hay and water for each horse for that comfortable ride to another country? Get real. Does she really think it is better to take a horse from its home, its friends, its comfort zone, throw it in a big yard to fend for itself, get stuffed onto a truck with many others barely able to move, slowly starving but even faster dehydrating to death, some screaming in pain, some not able to make the trip in its entirety. This is her happy solution?

Wherever I lived, I made it my business to determine how horses were handled locally when they passed. When I lived in Texas, the Tiger Preserve was happy to take the donation. The horses were professionally handled, owners knew that the horses were recycled, and another animal lived because of it and we did not take up more precious earth with a burial. I could live with that.

When I lived in L.A., the horses were recycled to the hounds. Now I live in Aiken and cannot find this type of answer, so I keep several backhoe operators numbers on my fridge and my horses will hopefully pass here happily at the farm. My horses are among the lucky ones.

I agree with her that if a person doesn't have a small amount of money for an emergency, they should probably not own a horse. Financial circumstances have changed greatly in the last 10 years and I know many people who forego life's luxuries in order to keep their horses with them, including me. When a close friend's husband was diagnosed with ALS and they could no longer keep their horses, we stretched the budget and took them in until the right loving home was found. We paid for transport, shots, feet trimmed, worming, teeth floated, etc....I DID do something about it in my backyard.

It is not really for us to say whether they should have horses or not. (Don't get me started on why people have kids and can't afford them!) It is my opinion that if we have national centers, with oversight, with involvement from the horse industry, then horses could have a safe place to go for their final destination. This is not a happy ending but it is far better than what I have seen and heard about. Should we let domesticated horses loose to fend and graze for themselves? People have. Should people sneak up to a trailer and tie their horse to it, hoping the trailer owner will take the horse home? Some have. Should they just let it starve at home? Some have.

I applaud Sidelines for covering these issues. It is not pleasant to write about and certainly is not pleasant to read about. The articles make us better informed which will make us better organized as a group to have a better effect on what happens to these great animals. Thank you Sidelines.

Kathie Roberts
Aiken, SC

Owner of Cathouse, Coupe, Ferrari, Leon, Pops, Grandma, Scarlett and Cosmo. Part of my family!



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To the Editor:

I just read your editor's note to Laura Aust-Olkin's letter re: "For the Love of Horses". Good job!! I swear - I wish there were a moratorium placed on breeding for ten years. And I like those words - we are PRO HORSE, not pro-slaughter, much like the words slung about regarding abortion . . . "pro-life" vs "pro-choice."

Ann Kiser
Jackson, SC

To the Editor:

Bravo to you! Your reply to Ms Aust-Olkin was so right on. I'm proud of you my friend!

Judy Bush
Lisbon, OH

To the Editor:

Loved your response to the person who wrote regarding horse slaughter. We really need to educate more people instead of playing ostrich!

Mary Strasser
Pinehurst, NC