



## THE 907 HALLELUJAH HORSES MISSION

In October of 2016, Elaine Nash, founder and director of Fleet of Angels, received a phone call from a South Dakota State Attorney. The outcome of the phone call was the SA making a request that Fleet of Angels assist in placing 270 mustangs from a group of 907 wild mustangs that had been seized from a failed sanctuary after they were found to be starving and neglected. The rest of the horses were held by two SD counties in a lien placed on them against the cost of hay that was being fed to the horses during their impoundment while awaiting a final court determination on what would be done with the horses. In other words, the State Attorney had authorized the impoundment of the horses, two counties were feeding the horses to 'save' them, but they were planning to sell them at a kill buyer auction in order to recoup the funds spent on hay.

Against what were considered by most to be insurmountable odds that included winter blizzards that brought hard blowing snow, wind chills of -50 degrees, 20' high snow drifts, and a lack of infrastructure for capturing or housing the horses, Fleet of Angels took on the challenge and succeeded in finding homes for all 270 of the available horses. Every horse left with at least one buddy or family member so no horse had to go to its new life alone. Then, in an effort to save the rest of the horses- those that were under a lien and scheduled to be sold at auction that kill buyer were en route to, Fleet of Angels and partner organizations quickly raised over \$150,000 which was needed to pay off the lien and cancel the auction.

45 days later, a South Dakota judge permanently removed the horses from the ownership of ISPMB (ironically called the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros), and turned all remaining 600-plus horses over to Fleet of Angels. In a massive effort, FOA led a campaign to find good, approved, adoptive homes for all the rest of the horses- in groups of two or more.

By May of 2018, every horse had been adopted- including a group of 20 elderly stallions, seven of whom were blind, who all went together to a sanctuary built especially for them by a rescue who adopted them all. ASPCA created the 'Equine Welfare Award' especially for Fleet of Angels, and presented it at their annual awards event in NYC in

November of 2017, two months before the last of the horses were transported to new homes, finalizing the mission.

The Hallelujah Horses mission is considered to be the largest rescue of horses in history. In a short 22 months, a small group of volunteers raised over \$500,000, fed 907 horses back to a healthy weight, gelded hundreds of wild stallions, and found good homes for every horse\*, and arranged for the transportation of the horses to homes all over America. \*Under the advisement of a team of top veterinarians, approximately 20 (2%) of the 907 horses were euthanized by the vets due to the severity of injuries or years of neglect, and could not be made healthy or comfortable.

It is the hope of those who dedicated a tremendous amount of time, energy, heart, and money to this effort for almost two years that The Hallelujah Horses mission saved not only the horses that were personally served by the effort, but will also serve to inspire and motivate others to tackle what others call 'impossible', let no one stand in the way, and never give up until that 'impossible' goal is accomplished- for good.

Fleet of Angels is a 501(c)3 service organization that helps horses that are in crisis.