

What Are The Odds?

by Laurie Monroe

An e-mail is opened within hours from when it arrives. The phone rings at home and I'm actually there and answer it. There is room at the inn? If you knew me, then you would know the odds are NOT high for any of these events. How about the odds of someone actually attending an upstate New York known kill-buy auction and regardless of the horse's dilapidated state outbid the for-slaughter representative, bumping into someone who seemed to know who the daddy of this colt might be, then painstakingly researching the baby's background and beginnings, AND attempting to make contact with the breeding stallion owner...

This is "Rezzy's" new life, which started when a young woman named Dawn Robyn Petrlik of Rosemary Farm (visit her on Facebook) elected to attend the Usadilla Auction, despite all the reasons she couldn't go that day playing in her head. Dawn is an advocate for horses who are specifically targeted by the kill-buyers, and this was Rezzy's lucky day.

Rezzy (name changed for anonymity), a yearling Irish Draught Sport Horse colt and his brother, a yearling purebred Irish Draught colt both found themselves at the auction that day due to no fault of their own. The majority of owners who resort to auction are in over their heads and are looking for a quick way out. They generally lack understanding of the planning required to successfully raise and manage horses in or out of a breeding program and are often overwhelmed by the costs involved.

Information about the babies' breed and breeding was passed to a few people in the audience at the auction and in glowing terms, but apparently was not shared with the auctioneer as they were originally introduced as Quarter Horse fillies... Rezzy's brother was purchased by a private buyer who has since made contact with the stallion owner as well, to let her know that the colt is kind and well-liked in his new home, and has an excellent chance for a better life where he is today. Rezzy, the sport horse was more skittish and the 'rougher' looking of the two and ended up being 'saved' by Dawn, who bid against the kill-buyer.

Once the purchase was made and Rezzy was transported back to Rosemary Farm, settled in and cared for, attempts to reach the original breeder were made with no satisfaction. Then Dawn found us... the owners of Rezzy's daddy. As soon as we heard of this colt's plight we offered to adopt Rezzy for a private treaty sum and started to make plans to travel to NY from FL to pick him up and bring him back to 'family'.

During the trip up to NY we blew two trailer tires outside of Washington, DC within 10 miles of each other. Our thanks for the kindness of a Ford Dealership service staff (who changed our first blown tire for us), and Smitty, from Smitty's Used Tires (off Mississippi Avenue in DC) who had the ONLY tire store still open who was willing or able to help us with our tires late on a Saturday afternoon (even though those gently used tires were not trailer tires - they got us all safely back home without further incident).

On the trip back, Rezzy began to lie down and cast himself against the trailer walls. He had the entire three-horse trailer to himself and had an 8 inch bed of shavings and straw to lie on, but his lifetime quotient of travel was probably 3-4 hours, and we were going to be on the road for 18-plus, so he got tired and uncomfortable.

After he lay down and cast for the third time, we decided to take him off the trailer, let him stretch his legs, graze a little, drink, then reload and proceed. These processes - offload, walk, graze, water and entice back on to the trailer with a little grain (every hour, all the way home), ended up being the solution to Rezzy's trailer issues...

A very memorable moment, and I do so wish I had the camera at the time, was around 6:30 AM on day two of the return trip. We stopped to let Rezzy out and were talking about breakfast while he grazed around us. Next door from where we had stopped, there was a Sonic... *Continued Page 12*



I AM A SURVIVOR!

PERFECT! So, picture us, the perfectly rumped and grubby pair, covered in varying amounts of shavings and not smelling so hot after two solid days on the road, dragging around a perfectly horrible looking small horse on the end of a lunge line, walking over to the Sonic drive up area with the colt in tow.

The three of us (yes, including Rezy), read the menu board (okay so Rezy was just curious about the colors and lights), and then Rezy (accidentally) hit the order button. We ordered our food and hung out in the drive-up parking space until our food arrived. We certainly got our share of odd looks, but what did we care? We just got fed and Rezy helped us order!

It took us another nine hours to make it home, so we ended up being on the road over 27 hours one way. Was it worth it? You tell me. Does Rezy look alert, happy and interested in his surroundings in his photos? Do you think he enjoys being in an acre grassy paddock with a buddy right over the fence (he can't move in with his friend until he completes his socialization, gets a bit stronger and is carrying better weight). Do you think he enjoys his grooming and handling sessions?

While the 2,400 mile round trip was definitely grueling and tested our fortitude, we would do it again, just to be able to see this colt's daily improvements and watch him build more and more trust in people again. I try not to dwell on the myriad of "what ifs" for too long... What if Dawn did NOT go to the auction that day? What if the colts had not been introduced to the audience and the sire information was not shared. What if the kill-buyer kept bidding? The fact of the matter is ... this boy was saved and has been united with family. Trite, you say? No, not trite at all - a blessing and I believe meant to be.

I chose not to share any of his original photos with you as they are disheartening and somewhat disturbing. Most of you will have seen photos of skinny horses with long feet and coarse, starting, tangled long coats. Why push that imagery on you when I can show you what a little love, food, worming, foot care and light grooming can do? Here Rezy is shown just two weekends ago (seven weeks into rehabilitation), to show you what a viable young man he is turning out to be IN SPITE of his unfortunate recent past.

There have been a lot of arguments made for bringing slaughter back in the United States, and many of the proponents cite the marked increase in abandoned and starving horses as their leading argument. In my opinion, and prefaced in fact, there are over 30 reasons that horses are being abandoned in the USA and the leading issue is a dramatic change in economic circumstance. I am not here today to argue points for or against legalizing equine slaughter in the USA; rather, I am here to point out that regardless of circumstance, there is no reason (or excuse) for a perfectly viable horse to be neglected and then discarded at an auction in a dilapidated state and without the proper chance of a future. How many horses, young and older alike, end up at an auction like Rezy did do you think? The numbers are increasing at an alarming rate in some areas due to an oversaturation of horses, deep changes in a person's economic situation and security; and, even perhaps ill-thought out breeding practices and/or lack of education about horse ownership.

There ARE other choices and we hope the newly formed grass-roots group "CORE Breeders" will become a catalyst for fundamental changes in

how we view breeding and our individual and collective responsibility for the results of breeding. In the meantime, we thank groups like Dawn's who step in at a local level and support the unwanted children, siblings and parents of our horses, who, unbeknownst to the horses, become pawns in a deadly game at auction.

CORE Breeders' (Coalition Of Responsible Equine Breeders) grass-roots focus is to educate the amateur or new breeder of the breeding journey, from the financial commitment to the responsibility of horse ownership, to exploring where your responsibility as a breeder may (or may not) end once the foal is born and yes, even sold. As CORE expands, plans are forming to bring together resources for breeders and rescue organizations alike. A community of contacts and businesses that share CORE values and provide a quality service or function in the life of a horse.

CORE Breeders

Coalition Of
Responsible Equine Breeders



1-877-504-CORE



Front Range Equine Rescue

PO Box 307
Larkspur, CO 80118
719-481-1490

info@fronrangeequinerescue.org
www.fronrangeequinerescue.org

Working to Stop Abuse to Horses

Walkin N Circles Ranch, Inc. A NEW MEXICO HORSE RESCUE

JUNE 12, 2010

NM Caballos y Caballero
Warm Up Ride For Guinness
World Record® Trail Ride

presents

JUNE 13, 2010

NM Chile Pepper CTC
Guinness World Record®
Setting Trail Ride

On June 13th, 2010 something wonderful is going to happen... trail riders from all over the USA will be mounting up on the same day, from coast to coast, in the thousands, to show their support for the horse rescues in America. This is an ACTHA Competitive Trail Ride Competition designed to qualify for the Guinness World Record® Book!

June 12th, 2010 Warm Up Ride!

Come in a day early and compete on a different trail with different obstacles. Be ready for the World Record® Ride!

Six Miles of trails
with Six Challenging
Judged Obstacles both days.

Come join us for both days!
To be held at the Prestigious
Cedar Hill Farm Equestrian Center,
9031 Hwy 337 (Formerly Hwy 14),
Estancia, NM.

See website for map:

www.cedarhillfarmnewmexico.com

Potluck dinners both Friday and
Saturday night, music, campfire
& lots of fun!

Great Prizes 1st - 6th place!
Voluntary \$20 Jackpot for
Open Division at check in!

Stalls, camping & food available.

DIVISIONS & ENTRY FEES:

Open: \$58 entry
Pleasure: \$58 entry
Junior (ages 7-15): \$43 entry
Adult Buddy: \$40 entry
(non-competitive)
Jr Buddy: \$35 entry
(non-competitive)

Entry forms

and more information about joining
ACTHA and both of our rides
are available online at www.actha.us.
Entries per ride are limited so hurry,
SIGN UP EARLY!



Help Us Help

the Unwanted Horse



UNWANTED HORSE
COALITION

If you'd like to decrease the
number of unwanted horses, visit
unwantedhorsecoalition.org today.

1616 H St., NW, 7th Floor • Washington, D.C. 20006 • (202) 296-4031