



The horse-human bond.

AMERICA'S HORSES: **UNSUNG HEROES**

The human-equine relationship is one that is threaded throughout the fabric of our history. Humanity has been able to spread far and wide, conquering the wilderness, rough terrain, and other civilizations on the backs of horses.



One can perhaps argue that the domestication of the wild horse was one of the single most important events in the development of civilization because horses have greatly shaped and influenced the trajectory of humans. Despite the horse being an influential catalyst that aided in the success of our ancestors, however, the history of the human-equine relationship has been both beautiful and tragic, and history has not always been kind.

Harnessing their utility and power and subsequently categorizing horses as a commodity led to their mistreatment and commonplace cruel practices. How is it that the horse, with all of its contributions and gentle nature, ended up being the

main ingredient in canned dog food? How is it that an estimated eight million equines (horses, mules, and donkeys) died during WWI and only an estimated 200 returned home to the US? The carnage of horses at the hands of humans throughout history is well documented and should be acknowledged.

Sadly, horses are still faced with the same challenges, continuing to put their future welfare in jeopardy. Over 65,000 horses were transported across our borders for slaughter in 2019. The majority were young, healthy, and had untapped potential. Tens of thousands more are abused and neglected and in need of rescue, rehabilitation, and re-homing each year.



World War I

Because horses are viewed as a commodity, they have been collateral damage in the pursuit of economic growth instead of being honored as sentient beings with their own unique needs and desires, capable of forming deep, meaningful, and healing relationships with humans.

As the only national animal welfare charity focused 100% on the welfare of America's horses and honoring the horse-human bond, the EQUUS Foundation has been presented with a special challenge in helping keep horses safe during these unprecedented times. "With so many people facing hardships, we fear that many more of our four-legged equine friends may be subjected to abuse and neglect, and the number

of horses heading to the slaughter pipeline will increase," said Lynn Coakley, EQUUS Foundation President.

The EQUUS Foundation is committed to investing in the most impactful equine charities across the United States, which include programs that not only increase adoptions of at-risk horses and provide a safe-haven for aged ones, but also increase opportunities for all people to engage and partner with horses in new and innovative ways.

At the heart of its mission is the EQUUS Foundation Guardians program, which requires charities to undergo a rigorous annual vetting process to demonstrate that they are committed to the highest standards of horse

65,009

Horses shipped across the border to be slaughtered last year

48 million

People with disabilities in the United States

69,000

People with special needs currently assisted by America's horses

7,900

Horses currently assisting people with special needs



Photo courtesy of EQUUS Foundation Guardian Bravehearts
Therapeutic Riding Center

care and are transparent and accountable by making their horse care practices and operations available to public examination. Only EQUUS Foundation Guardian charities are eligible to receive financial support from the EQUUS Foundation. "There is no better way to give with confidence than to give to the EQUUS Foundation to benefit our Guardian charities. At-risk horses across the country need our help today more than ever. We are so thankful to horse lovers and the equestrian community for their compassion and generosity in helping us with our mission to protect the horses we love," said Valerie Angeli, EQUUS Foundation VP of Engagement.

For horses to remain an important part of American life and have a viable future, we need to embrace a fundamentally different paradigm in our

attitude towards horses, which shifts our focus from the horse as a commodity to the horse as a hero and healer. We need to invest in finding homes for America's horses where they can flourish as athletes, companions, teachers, and especially healers. By alleviating the suffering of horses, we are actively creating a kinder world because like us, they are also deserving of optimal health and a peaceful, rewarding existence.

Erika Sherman is a pre-veterinary student and an intern with the EQUUS Foundation. She is a graduate from New York University and is in the process of completing her post-baccalaureate at Farmingdale State College. She has a special interest in animal welfare and conservation medicine. Erika plans to attend veterinary school in the fall of 2021.

EQUUS

FOUNDATION

FOR THE LOVE OF HORSES

Where they go next is up to us

All horses, even champions of the racetrack and the show ring, may only be one unlucky sale away from abuse, neglect and slaughter. Tens of thousands of horses become at-risk each year. Over 65,000 horses were shipped across our borders to be slaughtered last year. Most were young, healthy and had untapped potential.

For horses to remain an important part of American life and have a viable future, we need to ensure that donor dollars are being spent on programs with the greatest impact - programs that not only increase adoptions of at-risk horses and provide a safe haven for aged horses, but also increase opportunities for all people to engage and partner with horses in new innovative ways.

At the heart of the EQUUS Foundation's mission is our Guardians program. EQUUS Foundation Guardian charities undergo a rigorous vetting process annually to demonstrate that they are committed to the highest standards for horse care and are transparent and accountable to the public. Only EQUUS Foundation Guardian charities are eligible to receive financial support from the EQUUS Foundation.

There's no better way to give with confidence than to give to the EQUUS Foundation -- and there's no better time to give than RIGHT NOW!

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