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her calories to the foal. She is the joy of the barn. She whinnies to anyone coming out to the barn and comes right to the fence to get her well deserved attention and treats. She is being loved on by two little girls that volunteer at FCER. I was told these girls are not much for the grunt work of grooming, but for pixie they will spend hours brushing and combing and have finally gotten all the tangles out of her mane. As for Pixie she seems to love it too. She stands as still as a rock the whole time the girls are grooming her.

Pancake The Mule

You heard the beginning of the mule's story, but here is the happy ending. After talking to the sale barn owner, we found out that the mule was very well trained. He had been hunted and packed on. He still was not interested in being touched, but we took him as we already had one person interested in adopting him. I brought my cousin and her 12 year old son down to help transport him and two other horses to Aztec. The mule took one look at the kid and came right over and loved on the kid. I was stunned. Until this point the mule had been stand offish and uninterested in anything we had. No to treats, no soft words, nothing. Yet, for a child, this mule was a lap dog.

#24 Pregnant Black Mare



It turns out this mule loves kids! I mean will do just about anything for a child. We had three people lined up and ready to adopt this mule within four days. The original foster (and possible owner) for the mule let him go as he was obviously not a project mule. He ended up going to a very nice gentleman with three grandkids. They have plans to spoil the mule rotten.

Helen and Amber

We found Helen in the mare pen. Debbie had treats with her and as soon as this mare figured out what Debbie had in her pockets, she followed Debbie every where. Quietly, calmly, but a shadow that Debbie could not shake. At first she was an automatic choice, then we saw the other side of her face and realized she was missing an eye. The socket was still damp, but there was no eyeball left. With heavy hearts we shifted her to the side. As nice as she was, it is very hard to adopt out a one eyed horse. And the vet bills... I showed her to a couple that came down to the sale barn because of the online publicity of the rescue operation. They were looking for a quiet horse for the husband to ride. Boy, was

#25 Helen



this mare quiet. No go as soon as they saw her missing eye. Over the next two days I kept thinking about the mare.

At the same time we had pulled up a couple of pregnant mare, one who was so scared we couldn't get a close look at her because she kept hiding behind the first mare. All we could tell was she was very pregnant, tall, and RED. When we finally got the first mare out of the pen and could see miss red I realized she had some massive scarring out her side. There were five long scars all pointing to a triangular flap of skin sticking up, perpendicular from her body. The bad part was this was a very old injury as all the skin was covered in hair, including the flap of skin sticking out from her side. What was even worse was it was right in the area that the girth would sit on. I did not think this mare was a good candidate for rehab with the injury and her being so scared. I was going to put her back the next day.

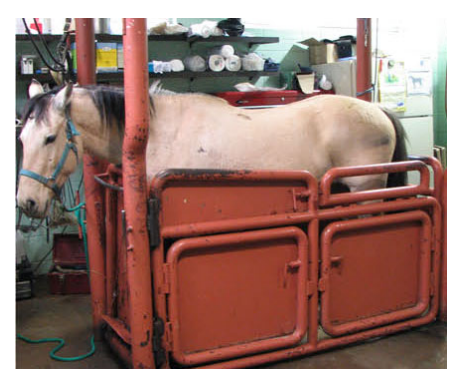
#26 Amber and foal



#27 Stretch



#28 Buttermilk



#29 Bay Mare and foal #30 Chestnut Mare/foal



All night long I tossed and turned. These two mares would not let me sleep. Morning finally came and I called Debbie. In tears I said that I felt we should take these mares out since we were a “rescue” and nobody else would save them. I knew it was a bad financial decision, but I also believed God had put these mares in our hands, I mean poor Helen kept throwing herself at us and Amber was the only mare we could get to come up the other pregnant mare. (We tried to get some pregnant mares for one hour the day before with only two deciding to finally come with us.)

I am not sure what swayed Debbie, the tears, the pleading, the horses, or Debbie’s own soft heart, but she agreed with me and we decided to pull them both out.

Amber ended up going to Walkin N Circles Rescue (along with two others) and foaled the in the night after she arrived. They think the vet can do some reconstructive surgery and fix the scars on her side so that she will be rideable someday. First she has to learn to trust

people. For this poor mare that will be a long hard road. So far I don’t think humans have done right by her at all.

Helen ended up at the vet in Aztec. He was just amazed by her. It turns out that the eyeball was still in the socket. Somehow she had a horrific accident where something had punctured the eyeball, draining all the fluid out. She still had the dried up eyeball attached to the nerve. This poor mare could feel everything that was going into the eye socket. he said she should be completely crazy with pain, not following us around like a puppy dog. Over the next couple of days that opinion was proved over and over again as Helen was a perfect lady about anything asked of her. It turns out she is only 13 and seems to have a lot of training as she is amazing to work with on the ground.

Helen’s eye socket was cleaned out, the nerve end deadend, and the eyelid stitched shut to keep it clean. She is healing well and will soon be up for adoption.

We named her Helen because Debbie

said she reminded her of a Gladiator, fighting through all sorts of evil to come out great in the end. We had a little trouble coming up with a girl’s name until I mentioned Helen of Troy. I was talking to a friend later and told her that we had named the mare Helen.

“Oh you mean like Helen Keller?” she said.

Funny, that one had not occurred to me or Debbie, but it sure fits too.

Grand Dame

When the sale barn owner showed her to me all I could think was “Oh my, goodness!”

This poor chestnut mare had both eyes swollen completely shut. she could not see a thing and was having a hard time coping with being in a pen with four other horses. She was making it, but it was painful to watch.

I told the owner to give me a really good price. We haggled a little, and we still paid too much, but who else was going to help her?

Two days later it was her turn to go home, with a stop by the vet first. She put up a fuss, but I was finally able to get a halter on her. At this point she had one eye still swollen shut and the other swollen half shut. So basically, she can see 1/4 of what she normally would. This mare handled it by being a tank. Just bulldoze your way thru. I got on her “good” side and started to lead her down the run. To slow her down I would put one hand in front of the “good” eye and say “STOP!”. Then I could maneuver her around a corner or through a gate. When we got close to the place where the sale barn runs the horses thru a tight chute and into the auction ring this mare freaked. She started shaking all over, refusing to go forward, and jogging sideways, trying to pull me back where we had just come from. Suddenly it all made sense. We were all trying to figure out how she had damaged both eyes, but

#31 Big Bay Mare/foal



#32 Black Mare



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not the rest of her face. She must have gone down in the chute, banged her head around trying to get up, and hit both eyes as she struggled. I started talking to her.

“Come on, we can get passed this. You don’t have to go in there, but you do have to go by it to get to the trailer. You want to get in the trailer, because we are going to take you somewhere safe to have your baby. Come on, we just have to go pass this bad place then you can get into the trailer and go home.”

I kept talking in a soft tone and finally got passed the bad place. I think she took all my words to heart because from that moment on her whole focus was to get on the trailer! When I put her in a side pen beside the trailer so we could load a couple of others first she threw a fit. She whinnied, she paced, she pawed, man she was going to get on that trailer one way or the other!

It was finally her turn. She all but plowed us over to get to the trailer. She dragged me through the gate, around the corner and to the trailer. She fought while we decided the best way to load an all but blind mare and not get the handler stuck. I mean she was a tank and we did not want to get someone hurt. All our concern was for nothing. As soon as we got her in the trailer, she settled. She put her head down, sighed, took a bite of the hay in front of her and looked at me like “it’s about time you got me

loaded!” I slithered around her, hugging her side, then ducking under her head and hugging her neck to get out of the trailer. She never so much as twitched. As far as she was concerned her job was done. I told her the trailer would take her to safety, so she was getting on that trailer come hell or high water.

At the vet’s office in Farmington, it was discovered that she had broken her eye socket when she went down in the chutes. Dr. Quintana pulled out bone chips over the one eye, but thought she would be fine. No damage to the actual eyes.

As of the time of writing this article this mare is doing great, but she is still a tank. The other small problem is now that she can see, she aims for you. That’s right, she kicks. I think it probably just a self defense maneuver, and will get over it as soon as she realizes we are not out to hurt her or her upcoming foal. Only time will tell.

I have lots more stories, but space is short. So I encourage you to get online and visit the FCER’s website at www.fourcornersequinerescue.org and their Facebook page. You can also visit Hoofprints’ Facebook page We are trying to keep up to date info on all these sites. News and foal pictures will be posted as the come available.

There are several key points I want to mention.

One

Yes, horses still go to slaughter. The

slaughter plants are not allowed in the U.S., but they are up and running in Canada and Mexico. Before the U.S. plants were shut down we were killing 100,000 horses a year. No provisions were made for these horses once the slaughter plants were shut down. That means we are producing about that same amount each year in unwanted horses. The sheer numbers are overwhelming. While at this particular sale barn I watched four double decker semi trucks come in and unload horses. (100 +/- in each truck.) There were also several individuals bringing in horses two to ten at a time to run through the sale barn. That is over 400 horses coming in one day at one sale barn. The numbers tell us that there are more horses than available owners. This is repeated all across the U.S. Right now, we have a huge “unwanted” horse problem! With the economy the way it is, some people want them but just can’t afford them. It amounts to the same thing!

Two

The sale barns are not my favorite places. However, if owners were more responsible, we would not need these sale barns! The sale barns did not make these horses super thin. In fact thin horses only hurt their bottom line. Think about it, a fat horse will bring much more than a skinny horse when it goes across the scale. I know that is a sick thought, but it is the truth. The sale barns also did not breed these mares. They can not

HELP!

Do you feel like you are behind the times and everything is on Facebook? You want your business to be on Facebook also, but don’t know how to do it or where to turn. Turn to someone who can be your very own social media manager for a low monthly payment.

Contact Linda Threet at email iamequi@nmol.com or call 505-832-0803.



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ship a pregnant mare. It is only more hassle on their part to have to deal with a mare and foal. Add to that they have no use for a foal. There is a minimum weight requirement for slaughter and foals don't even come close....so a foal to them is just extra time and feed until it gets big enough for someone to take...either to a home or to slaughter. So, while I don't like sale barns they are not the root cause of the problem...owners are! (I do think that the sale barns could do a little more in the health care department....and a little more caring, but who am I to say?)

Three

We have all been told that there is something wrong with the horses at a sale barn. While that can be true, it is not always true. I saw a bunch of very nice horses in the pens. Some were very young and needed to be trained, but otherwise were in great shape. Others were older and had that been there done that look (great kids horses). Then there were all the horses inbetween. Yes, there were a lot that had problems, but I think there were just as many that didn't.

When looking at a horse don't just see it standing still. Make it move at a walk and a trot at least. This will show any lameness problems. Don't take something that is lame or has obvious other problems just because you want to "help" unless you are willing to handle all the vet bills and possibly end up with just a pasture pet.

If you decide to give a sale barn a try, realize this is not going to be a walk in the park. You need a tough skin to walk through the pens and decide on just one or two to take home. It is worse than the animal shelter!

Watch out for yourself. Always go with a friend. do not go by yourself, because if you get in trouble in a pen you are the only one who know exactly where you are. At least if you have a friend they can run for help.

Keep in mind this is a business for the sale barn. They will not just give you a horse because it is the "right thing to do". Expect to pay at least meat market price. Last week that was 34 cents a pound. So a 1000 pound horse will cost you about \$340 dollars. However, keep in mind, you can bargain a little on the prices. Remember, the sale barn still has to feed the horse until it is time to go and they have to pay for the gas to get the horse to Mexico. So yes, you can get a good deal, but don't go in expecting to get a horse for \$10, it just won't happen.

Also, keep in mind these places have heard everything about how they should be ashamed of themselves for shipping horses to slaughter. From their point of view, what else are you going to do with these unwanted horses? Let them starve to death out on the Mesa? (Trust me that is just a bad if not worse.) The nicer you are to the people you deal with at the sale barn the better deal you will get. They don't have to sell a horse to you!

Four

This was a huge effort by a lot of people. One phone call got it all started, but before we were done we had hundreds of people helping with donations, transportation, foster homes, vet care, and general health care once they got to the rescues. (Thank God for volunteers!) No one person can pull off something like this. It take a whole lot of people. With that in mind, Debbie and I would like to see this happen again. Maybe a "Spring the Mares" campaign each spring to help the pregnant mares. We also want to help other horses. If you know someone who is struggling to make ends meet and really can't take care of their horses tell them to contact FCER at 505-334-7220 or online www.fourcornersequinerescue.org. They can also contact me, Karri Sauve, at 505-401-1633. Some just need temporary help, and others need to find new

homes for their equines. We will work with anyone to help the horses stay safe and not end up in the slaughter pipeline.

We would also like to start a network of folks willing to help foster and transport animals in need. I may even start a separate organization with fundraising, coordinating rescues, and certain programs geared toward gelding horses. We need to get on the front end of this problem, instead of always being on the back end!

In the end together we pulled out 32 horses. That number does not include foals already on the ground or ones coming. Three horses went to Walkin N Circles Ranch, the others are being handled by Four Corners Equine Rescue (FCER). Fresh Start Horse Rescue in Dolores, Colorado will take two of the mares once they are cleared to travel by vet. We still need donations to help with ongoing vet care. Anything from \$1 to \$100 helps.

By working together we are able to do amazing things. Thank you to everyone for helping the horses! Keep us in your prayers...the horses need it.

Four Corners Equine Rescue
505-334-7220
www.fourcornersequinerescue.org

New Mexico's Hoofprints Magazine
505-401-1633
hoofprintspublication@hotmail.com

Walkin N Circles Ranch
505-286-0779
www.wncr.org.

Sale Barns in New Mexico
(I could not reach a couple of places to verify that they handled horses,. The list is from the livestock board and they said I would just have to call. Of the ones

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Calendar of Events

that do handle horses, some ship to Mexico, others just move them on to the place that does ship.)

Southwest Livestock
Los Lunas 505-865-4600
Sale Days: Saturday

Cattleman's Livestock Auction Co., Inc.
Belen 505-864-7451
Sale Days: Friday

Clovis Livestock Auction, Inc.
Clovis 575-762-4422
Sale Days Wednesday

Five States Livestock Auction
Clayton 575-374-2505
Sale Days: Wednesday

Roswell Livestock Auction
Roswell 575-622-5580
Sale Days: Monday

Southwest Regional Stockyards
Demming 575-546-8851
Sale Days: Wednesdays

Cow House Livestock Auction
Kirtland 505-947-5797
Sale days: Monday

Dulce Livestock Auction
Dulce 575-864-7451
Sale Days: Wednesdays Sept - Nov. only.

FYI - Places like the Ruidoso Downs Sales do not have "killer buyers" at their sale.



If we work together miracles can happen!

We try to be as accurate as possible, but schedule changes & mistakes do happen. Please call the contact number listed by each event to verify time & date.

April

Every Week: Live Horse Racing at Sunland Park Race Track. 10 minutes west of El Paso in New Mexico. Racing is on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Dec. 10 - April 19. For more information call (575) 874-5200 or go online to www.sunland-park.com.

Every Week: Live Horse Racing at Sunray Park Race Track in Farmington, New Mexico. Racing is on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. April 23 - July 12. For more information call (505) 566-1200 or go online to www.sunraygaming.com.

Every Tues Night:

at Bosque Farms Rodeo Arena. From April 5 to Oct. 7, 6:15pm – 9:15pm Timed practice of poles, flags, and barrels. Open to the public and all ages. \$3 per run - \$2 per run for BFRA members. Call Rick at 869-2388 for details. Arena opens at 6:15 PM for warm-up. Runs start at 6:30 PM

Every Sun: NM Polocrosse Practice in Espanola, NM. at 12p.m. Call 505-753-7746 or go online to www.nmpolocrosse.com

Every Sun: Come join Habanero Polocrosse every Sunday at noon for a Whackin' Good Time at the Habanero Polocrosse Field at 2247 Kelly RD SW located a few blocks north of Arenal off of Atrisco (turn East on Kelly). Our players range in age from 12-45 and our equines are off-the-track TB's to ranch geldings from 4 years old to 18! Call 505.934.1984 for more information or email habanero.polo@yahoo.com

Every Sun: Los Lunas, NM. Try something new with your horse! Join a friendly group of folks on Sunday afternoons at 1:00p.m. for Polocrosse. No special equipment needed and there are no fees! Call Kindra at 505-280-6510 for details.

3rd Sat: The Buffalo Range Riders, a SASS mounted shooting club holds a practice/fun match the 3rd Saturday of each month at Founders' Ranch in Edgewood. Warm up at 11 a.m., fun match at noon. Visitors are welcome. Scheduled dates for this year are April 17, May 15, June 19, July 17,