



RENEWS

WINTER 2007

News from the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation • Offering Renewed Hope to All Involved

TRF mission extends its reach

Having helped hundreds of male inmates over the years go on to lead better, more productive lives, the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation has taken the next logical step. Last October, female inmates at the Lowell Correctional Institution in Ocala, Florida began working with TRF horses. The Lowell program marks the first time the TRF has been involved with a women's prison. This is Florida's second facility and a signature breakthrough for the TRF.

For now, the women work with the horses on a rotating basis with male inmates from nearby Marion Correctional Institution. In the near future, a separate facility, which will include a barn and a classroom, will be built on the Lowell grounds, which will allow the female inmates to work with the horses seven days a week. About 15 horses will become part of the Lowell program, which can include as many as 18 inmates.

The TRF's theory has always been that not only can people help retired race horses but that retired race horses can help people. That's been obvious since the TRF opened its first farm on the grounds of a correctional facility. Not



The pioneering women of the TRF's Lowell Correctional Equine Program.

only have hundreds of inmates learned a valuable skill they can apply upon their release, they have simply become better people. Caring for an animal and developing a bond with it can soften even the most hardened individual.

At Lowell, John Evans, who runs the program for the TRF, has found that women seem to have emotional needs that men may not experience.

"I find that working with the horses has really helped them," he said. "Most of the women are more tender-hearted than the men and, psychologically, this is very rewarding for them. About half of my students are mothers and are locked away from their children. The horses become their surrogate children."

Evans, the former farm trainer at Bridlewood Farm, expects that many of his students will go on to work in horse-related fields.

Continued on page 2



Will you please copy this coupon and pass it on to a friend.

YES, I want to help.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Here is my donation in the amount of \$ _____

We would like to use your name in our annual report on giving to the TRF. Please check here if you prefer the donation to remain anonymous.

Payment method:

Send check to: Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation
PMB 351, 450 Shrewsbury Plaza
Shrewsbury, NJ 07702-4332

Charge my VISA / Mastercard / American Express

Acct. No. _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

The TRF is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Your gift is tax deductible. A copy of the foundation's latest annual report may be obtained, upon request, from the organization or from the Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway New York NY 10271

All contributors receive RENEWS, the TRF newsletter.

**To donate now, go to
www.trfinc.org/ssl/joinus.htm**

Colonel Davis

**We always knew she was special,
but now it's official**

Mimi Davis, who is the farm manager at the Maker's Mark Secretariat Center, a TRF facility, has been named a Kentucky Colonel. According to the official Kentucky Colonel website, the honor, which is bestowed by the state's governor, is awarded to individuals for their service to mankind. In this case, though, they might be talking about horsekind. At the Secretariat Center, Davis has helped dozens of retired race horses who might otherwise have been sent to slaughter find new homes.

Jim and Sandra Webb, who sponsor TRF horses, presented Davis with a certificate representing her new title.

"What we do here at the TRF touches people as well as the horses," Davis said. "We see this with our correctional facility farms and other therapeutic programs. It is nice to know people appreciate our organization in more than monetary ways. My thanks to everyone who helps out with their time and effort. This award was given to me because we all work at this together to make it happen."



Colonel Davis (on right) being commissioned by Sandra Webb.

'Being with the horses on a daily basis is an awesome experience.'

From page 1

"We are developing people who have studied and who have had real hands-on experience with horses," he said. "Any one of them could have worked for me."

With the number of women incarcerated growing each year in this country, there was clearly a need for the TRF to expand beyond the traditional programs at prisons for males and troubled youths and extend its helping hand to others. Generally, women's prisons are lacking programs for personal rehabilitation. According to the latest available statistics, there are more than 107,000 women under the jurisdiction of State or Federal prison authorities. There are 765 inmates at Lowell.

Below are excerpts from testimonials from inmates in the TRF program:

"At the age of 24, with a beautiful 8-year-old daughter, I found myself wondering how to fix my life and find success and happiness. I asked God to help me. Shortly after, I found myself at Lowell CI. I was still a little confused on what God had in mind. Then I found out about the Equine program. The week I found out I got in the class I thought I was on my way to a breakdown. My daughter's birthday was the

same day I started the class. God sent me a blessing to help me hold on and stay strong. This program has made me excited about life and has opened my eyes to all the opportunities in life. The dreams I had as a child on being a vet may yet come true...I know I will learn lots and feel confident about my future...I wake up every morning and go to bed every night excited about the future. Thank you again, TRF."

Amy Morehead

"Working with these horses has made

me grow tall in all aspects of my shortcomings. I've chosen to work with a special horse, also short in stature, injured and needing special treatment. Together, our bond and trust of each other grows, helping us both with recovery. This program has truly enriched both our lives."

Julie Terrell

"When I first came to prison, my life was really a mess. I spent two and a half years at work camp. Then I heard about the Equine program at Lowell. I had grown up riding horses and was very excited once I got into the class. The last five months have really changed my life. I have become more confident and more focused on my future. Working with these beautiful animals has given me a freedom I never thought I'd feel in this place."

Martha D. Lawson

"Since coming into the program, I have experienced a sense of peace that I have never felt before. My profession prior to coming to prison was in banking. I always thought I would spend my life in that. However, now that I've been in this program, I realize that I want to continue working with horses. Being with the horses on a daily basis is an awesome experience."

Donna Lawrence (photo, left)



The Story of Linden Hill:

A CAUTIONARY TALE

Rosemary Smutz is an owner who believes in doing the right thing when the time comes for her horses to retire. So, when the end of the line came for Linden Hill, who made 93 career starts, Smutz found what she believed was a perfect home for the then 9-year-old.

Several months later, and unbeknownst to Smutz at the time, an emaciated Linden Hill was rescued thanks to a joint effort between the TRF and Lost & Found Horse Rescue out of the killer pen at the New Holland sales. The TRF used money donated by Peggy Santulli, a TRF director, specifically for the rescue of New Holland horses to acquire Linden Hill.

Though grateful that the old horse had been saved from slaughter, Smutz was understandably horrified at what had happened to him.

"I was just stunned," she said. "The fact that he was so emaciated and had been so uncared for was also stunning."

After Linden Hill made his final start, in an April 27, 2005 claimer at Penn National, Smutz gave him to an individual who was involved with a riding program at a nearby college. She believed the individual would take good care of Linden Hill and do so for the foreseeable future. She found out later Linden Hill wasn't working out the way his new owner had hoped.

"I guess he couldn't do anything with the horse and he wasn't fitting into his program," Smutz said.



The next stop for Linden Hill was another farm whose owner apparently promised that Linden Hill would have a bucolic life romping in fields and giving rides to the owner's children. From there, the trail goes cold, but, somewhere along the line, Linden Hill was discarded and sent to New Holland. Fortunately, Kelly Young from Lost & Found Horse Rescue was there for him.

Linden Hill is now firmly entrenched in the TRF program and no harm will ever again come to him. He is currently residing on Akindale Farm in Pawling, New York. While his future is guaranteed, there will be more horses like Linden Hill. That

Linden Hill in action.

Photo: Chip Bott

is among the many reasons why the racing industry needs to do more to look after the everyday horses that are the backbone of the sport.

"Generally, we find that people in racing want to do the right thing by their horses," said TRF Executive Director Diana Pikulski. "If we had an industry-funded retirement plan, horses would not fall through the cracks. Woodbine has put together a nice program with a quarter of one percent of the purse fund going to retirement. This needs to happen here in the States too."

A Well-Deserved Retirement

Jan Kees first hit the racetrack as a 2-year-old in 1991. Fifteen years later, he was still there.

A son of Broad Brush, Jan Kees raced until he was 10 and then became a lead pony shortly thereafter. It wasn't a bad life for the son of Broad Brush, who made 101 career starts and won 26 races. Owner Felipe Sosa, who ponied horses to the starting gate, shared his donuts with him every morning and doted on him. But age started to catch up with Sosa and his faithful companion and the owner knew it was time for both to wind down.

Sosa, who is in his seventies, would be fine. But what about Jan Kees? Because of the TRF and trainer Lorita Lindemann, who volunteers for the organization at



A relaxed racetrack veteran on Priggen farm

Photo: Leslie Priggen

Suffolk Downs, Jan Kees would soon find himself living the good life.

"The horse had been on the racetrack all

these years. No one deserved a good retirement more than him" Lindemann said. "The gentleman who owned him, who doesn't speak very good English, agreed. With all of us working together, we got him off to the TRF. This horse loved his job, but he was telling everyone he was getting tired."

Jan Kees was taken in by Leslie Priggen, who serves on the TRF's board of directors and has a farm in Glasco, New York. He's still getting his favorite treat, cake donuts.

"He's a darling," Priggen said. "I'm so happy to have him. The thing is, after all those years on the racetrack and all that time in stalls, this is the first time ever he's been allowed to be a horse."



THOROUGHBRED RETIREMENT FOUNDATION

PMB 351, 450 Shrewsbury Plaza
Shrewsbury, NJ 07702-4332

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
FORKED RIVER, NJ
PERMIT #9

IN THIS ISSUE:

- TRF adds women's prison program to the mix
- Volunteer spotlight
- Mimi Davis gets ranked
- The rescue of Linden Hill
- Jan Kees earns his retirement



About the TRF

Founded in 1982, the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation is a nonprofit organization that provides lifetime retirement for Thoroughbreds at satellite and TRF-operated farms in states that include Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, and through private adoptions. The principal retirement programs are located at state correctional facilities, where the horses' caretakers are prison inmates and juvenile offenders who derive both emotional and educational benefits from pioneering TRF vocational programs in horse care. The work of the TRF is wholly dependent on public support.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Tom Brennan

Sometimes, good help can be hard to find. So when Michele Oren, the farm manager at the TRF's Exceller Farm, needed someone to help out around the farm she operates in Poughquag, New York, she turned to one of the handiest and most reliable people she knows: her father, Tom Brennan.

Brennan, who is retired and lives in Bethel, Vermont, is a frequent visitor to Exceller, where he is a jack-of-all-trades. One of his main duties has been to maintain and paint the farm's fences. At Exceller, Oren retrains horses for their post-racetrack careers and has been vital in the TRF's efforts to adopt out as many horses as possible.

"She's tough, but she never asks anybody to do anything that she can't do, won't do or hasn't done," Brennan said of his daughter. "When I'm doing the chores, I tell the horses that grandpa is here. I give them a little extra. I try not to get too attached to her horses because if I did I know how much I'd miss them."

Oren said her father's contributions go way beyond painting fences.

"Tom Brennan has added a touch of wisdom and charm to the Exceller volunteer family," she said. "Since the beginning of my tenure here, he has helped with everyday chores such as feeding, fence painting and repairs. But, more than that, he helps bring a true feeling of family. He travels from Vermont for every open house, helping with the set up and tending bar on the day of the event. Tom entertains the visitors to our open house with his warm



Tireless volunteer Tom Brennan at TRF Exceller Farm.

Irish charm and makes everyone feel welcome and part of a wonderful party, rather than an on-looker at an event. He may be my dad, but I think I speak for all of us at Exceller Farm when I say that Tom Brennan not only volunteers his time, but he donates his wonderful humanity and kindness to the people, as well as to the horses we are working to save."

Said TRF Executive Director Diana Pikulski: "I have known Tom for about as long as I have known Michele and I can tell you that the TRF really lucked out when he agreed to come on board."