

Rescued horses finding love, hope await them at couple's Second Chance Ranch

Written by Marty Randall

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Seeing is believing, as the old saying goes.

When Jenny McIntosh recently accompanied Sheriff John Lizenby and members of the Scott County Sheriff's Posse to a small farm where four horses were reported near death, seeing the animals' conditions made her fighting mad.

"I usually try to stay neutral, but I felt like kicking someone when I saw these four, especially the one they'd tied in an old, dark barn. No food, no water. You wouldn't want to do that to your worst enemy, much less an animal that depends on you for care," McIntosh stated.

The confiscation of animals was the second in six months that the Sheriff's Office has performed. Sheriff Lizenby said in both cases owners of the horses taken had been warned and instructed on what a typical horse needs to have to thrive.

In the case in July, three horses were confiscated and brought to Jenny and Joe McIntosh's Second Chance Ranch. They were in very poor physical condition. Jenny McIntosh reported that proper feed was responsible for a remarkable transformation. "The state vet was visiting the other day. She walked right past the horses she'd seen in July. She told me she didn't even recognize them, they looked so good!" she related.

All three of those animals have been adopted by people who are taking very good care of them, Jenny added. The horses' former owners are now facing animal neglect charges in Scott Superior Court.

That will probably also happen to the most recent temporary adoptees at Second Chance Ranch, advised Sheriff Lizenby. The officer is naturally prejudiced in favor of horses; he's a licensed horse dentist and has enjoyed owning horses for years.

The latest foursome to arrive at the McIntoshes' ranch were rated by a state veterinarian as 1s or 2s on a 1-to-10 scale, where 10 is an animal who is fat. The horse kept in the barn will most likely have to be put down because she has cancerous tumors, one of which has grotesquely swollen her head. "We hate it, but she's really too far gone," lamented Jenny.

The other three have a brighter future. The McIntoshes have already started them on a protein-enriched diet that includes Jenny's best unkept secret, beet pulp. "Beet pulp is just what an undernourished horse needs. You feed that along with grains and all the hay and grass they can eat, and they will blossom," she promised. "It's great stuff for nearly any animal."

The county's poor economic climate is to blame for some of the poorly-kept horses in Scott County. "Most people don't realize how much feed a horse needs to maintain its health. You start adding in the fact that you need to have their hooves trimmed or shod every six to eight weeks and their teeth checked and wormings and everything else you need to do for a horse, and you're running into some money. A horse is a real responsibility because he depends on you for his food. He can't run around like a cat or dog can and get a rabbit or two. You're his only source of food," Jenny explained.

Though the McIntoshes would like to take in more horses, their property can only hold so many. All of their recent efforts – and they've been helping rescue horses for 11 years now – have been financed by their own pockets. "If we could get a few donations, it would sure help," Jenny admitted.

The McIntoshes usually buy their feed at J&C Feed, a new store on East McClain Avenue (State Road 56) that is located less than a mile from the downtown Scottsburg square. Store owners Joe and Chris Robbins have photos of rescued animals being helped by the McIntoshes on display there.

Any donation of any size will be helpful. "We are always needing feed, salt blocks, hay, everything," related Jenny. People wanting to help in the effort can drop by J&C and give what

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they can. The Robbins have set up a special account for Second Chance Ranch for that purpose.

More information on the McIntoshes' efforts can be obtained by calling Jenny and Joe at 595-5072 or Sheriff Lizenby at 752-8400.

J&C Feed, located at 631 East McClain Ave., is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 8 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturday. The store can be reached at 752-8898.