

# THE HORSE'S VOICE

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## CMVHR MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS:

- ASPCA (nominated for 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award)
- American Paint Horse Association
- American Quarter Horse Association
- Association of Fundraising Professionals
- Emma Willard School Alumnae Association (2007 Humanitarian Award)
- National Association of Female Executives (2005 Member Profile)
- New York State Horse Council
- North American Horseman's Association (2005-2008 Safety Award)
- NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
- Westport Animal Control Officers

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Every day, we work hard to protect horses through mission-driven work, education and outreach programs, key note speaking, and more. This spring, our protection efforts took us to court.

For the first time in six years, we had to repossess one of our horses who was not being cared for according to the standards of our adoption contract by her adopter. In February, her adopter sued us.

We represented ourselves in court to avoid using donated funds that are needed to care for the horses, for legal counsel. For two months, we fought to defend our adoption agreement, which is in place to protect our horses once they leave the farm. Several of our volunteers, donors, and adoptive parents joined us in court. Those who couldn't come in person wrote letters to the judge, including CT State Representative, Diana Urban, who adopted Cabbie, a retired racehorse from us.

The good news is: we won. Our contract was upheld in a court of law, and Mazy, the horse we repossessed, is here with us where she belongs. The bad news is: we



Mazy (left), the subject of a lawsuit (pages 2 & 4).

put everything else in our lives on hold to fight that fight, including getting this issue of *The Horse's Voice* in the mail to you in a timely manner. Forgive us. Pages two and four air more about the court case.

Also in this issue: adoption success stories, and the selfless generosity of a 5 year old girl by the name of Jenna that gave Nellie, one of our rescue horses, her first radiation treatment for cancer and hope for a cure.

Most importantly, this issue salutes our 2008 donors. It's your backing that gave us the strength to fight the winning fight in a court of law for Mazy and for all of our horses.

Our donors stretch from coast to coast, covering 18 states and two countries. Eighty-one percent have renewed their support annually for more than 2 years, and most consecutively for 5 or more years.

CMVHR is also eligible for matching gifts through companies like General Electric, Verizon, and more. Special thanks to our donors who double their giving through these programs.

Our donors, like you, inspire us every day. We hope you are as proud of our accomplishments as we are appreciative of your support.

Edward Mrozik

## DEFENDING OUR CONTRACT IN COURT

In April 2008, we stood with tears streaming down our faces as Mazy was loaded on to a trailer to go “home.” The tears were bittersweet: joy at having found what we believed was a loving, permanent home for Mazy, and sadness for having to let her go after caring for her like our own for nearly 3 years. These are not unfamiliar tears. We’ve shed them at least 70 times in 6 years, for each horse we’ve placed. Mazy’s length of stay with us is also not uncommon because we work hard to find the right home, not a quick one. Despite our thorough screening process, we made the wrong choice in an adoptive parent for Mazy.



Mazy, the day we repossessed her from her adopter.

Fortunately, as we do with all horses we place, we required that Mazy’s adopter sign an adoption agreement. The contract outlines, among other things, the standard of care required for our horses, and it gives us the right to take the horse back if the adopter is no longer able to care for the horse, or if we determine that the horse is not being cared for properly. By signing the contract, adopters grant us permission to access their property to retrieve the horse if we make that determination. For the first time in 6 years, on September 16, 2008, we had to exercise our legal right under our adoption agreement to repossess a horse – Mazy – because she was not being cared for properly. We were heartbroken and angry that we made a mistake and let Mazy down, but grateful that a signed contract was in place to protect her, and us.

In February 2009, Mazy’s adopter sued us. First, she tried to have us arrested for stealing Mazy, but was thwarted by the State Police, who told her they could not assist her because a signed contract was in place. She then took the matter to civil court where she claimed \$3,000 in damages for expenses related to Mazy’s care while Mazy was in her custody. If she had won, we would have had to close our doors because it would have meant that people could adopt horses from us, use them for some period of time, return them to us, and sue us for the costs they incurred while they had them. That’s not our mission. Saving horses is. Ours was also a precedent setting case in our local jurisdiction because had our contract not been upheld in a court of law, all other local businesses that rely on contracts to do business would have been at risk.

To avoid using much-needed donations at a critical time in a tough economic climate, we represented ourselves in court. Due to the importance of this case for us and our local community, we contacted friends, volunteers, adoptive parents, and supporters to seek advice and help. We were heartened by the outpouring of support and willingness of so many to appear in court with us, or to write letters to the judge on our behalf.

continued on page 4.....

# WITH DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO OUR 2008 SUPPORTERS

Anonymous (1) - NY \*  
 Corinne Adams—NY \*  
 Doug and Maggie Alitz—NY \*  
 American Charities Bureau \*  
 Spencer and Sandra Baldwin—NY\*  
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 Patricia and Lawrence Bashaw—NY \*  
 Robert and Debra Bishop—NY  
 Julie and Tom Bisselle—NY \*  
 Bill and Elsa Boyce—NY \*  
 Richard and Christine Brewer —MO \*  
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 Bruce and Karen Butters—NY  
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 Sandra Carpenter—NY \*  
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 Christine and Bill Casey—NY \*  
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*Dream Catcher Farms*— NY \*  
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 Sarah and Richmond Wight—NJ \*  
 Patricia Wilber—NY \*  
 James and Barbara Wilson—NY \*  
 Robert and Janice Wilson—NY \*  
 Heather Zarcone—FL \*  
 David and Katherine Zientko—NY \*

## GIFTS IN HONOR OF:

Marcye Britt  
 Cody & Esprit  
 Frances Eisinger  
 Melissa Eisinger  
 Frances, Melissa and Dominic Eisinger  
 Deb Feeley  
 Hannah Moench  
 Anja Morgan  
 Pelham, King of Horses  
 Pat and Sven Peterson  
 Merrill Pine's birthday  
 Leah Shuette  
 Isabel Torgove's 12th birthday

## GIFTS IN MEMORY OF:

Cassidy and Dance  
 Doris Fee  
 Victor B. Gay  
 Andy and Stella Haigh  
 Ricky Harper  
 Richard W. Kull  
 Samantha Perreault  
 Kathleen Roemischer  
 C. Lawrence West

## MORE ABOUT MAZY... (CONT. FROM PAGE 2)

Diana Urban (photo), CT State Representative and National Coach for the United States Pony Club who adopted Cabbie from us, wrote these words to the judge in support of our case; "I found (Eddie's and Nancy's) farm to be managed totally professionally but also with an atmosphere that only love and caring can bring. They were careful to ask me what I intended to do with Cabbie, how I would approach his training, what would his stabling and turn out be like, who was my vet, my farrier, etc. In other words they took great care to interview and ascertain the appropriateness of my facility and my experience with horses.

They also required that I sign a contract giving them the option to repossess Cabbie if I didn't follow through with what I had outlined for his care and training. I appreciated that this was necessary as no matter how well you screen people there is always a chance that someone gets through the process who is, in fact, not the best adopter. With this signed contract it makes it possible for Nancy and Eddie to take a horse back who is not being treated properly.

Rescuing horses is not an easy task and it is, in fact, an act of love and kindness; it is not by any means a profit making enterprise! I understand that Nancy and Eddie had to repossess a horse that was not being treated properly and that the adopter is now suing them. In my mind, this is the quintessential frivolous law suit and should be treated as such.

I have the greatest admiration and respect for them and their often thankless mission to rescue horses and that is why I am writing this letter to you."

Every day, we fight hard for our horses. This was one of the toughest fights yet. After more than two months of preparation, two separate court appearances to present our case, and intense mental and emotional anguish, we won.



Diana Urban, CT State Representative with Cabbie  
(Humane Society of the US Legislator of the Year)

We are just now catching up on the life we put on hold. Forgive us for the tardiness of this issue of *The Horse's Voice* and our salute to our 2008 donors who gave us the strength to fight that fight. The delay in our communication and the public recognition of these wonderful gifts in no way diminishes the depth of our gratitude and appreciation for them, or for you, the backbone of our work, everyday.

### INSPIRATIONAL WORDS

Horse sense is the thing a horse has which keeps it from betting on people. *W.C. Fields*

God forbid that I should go to any heaven in which there are no horses. *R. Graham*

## ATTICUS, SCOOTER AND T-BONE CHECK-IN

Dear Eddie and Nancy,

I hope you are both doing well.

I am happy winter looks to be finally over. The horses are looking forward to being out on grass and in the warm sun. I finally got a few pictures together for you to see both of the boys. T-Bone is doing really well. He is as sweet as ever. Now that his door to his stall can stay open he is back to watching the TV set in the house. He loves to watch TV. Scooter (below) is my wild man. He would rather do barn chores than go riding. I think I did mention he liked to sweep and pick up after me. I was struggling to pick up a heavy muck bucket that I was using to clean his stall. He came over and lifted one side of the bucket by the rope handle and carried it to the wheel barrow and dropped it in for me. Also, in one of the pictures he has a stick in his mouth. He was watching me cleaning and picking up branches in his winter paddock, he started to help and brought me branches from the other side. I was really happy to catch the photo. He is absolutely the most helpful horse I know.

We hope to get up there soon to visit.

Love Chris



Hi Ed and Nancy,

Just wanted to let you know that Atticus (above right) is still doing great. I have waited to email you because I've wanted to send you pictures. Unfortunately, Atticus doesn't seem to like to have his picture taken, and never holds still. As soon as I can sneak in better pictures of him, I'll send you some. I have never seen a horse as happy and well-adjusted as Atticus is now. He and Zephyr are inseparable and have at least one daily running, bucking, goofy horse contest. Atticus does this incredible "dance" that I've never seen another horse do. We could watch him for hours, and sometimes we do. It's an amazing feeling to play with this horse who shows absolutely no fear or hesitation. When we first met Atty, it took all 4 of us almost an hour to catch him, now he comes to us. He has no qualms about setting his head on your shoulder and letting you brush him to sleep. He is truly a joy and has brought so much to our farm. It's hard to remember him not being here.

Well, thank you again for giving us that missing piece that was Atticus. We didn't know what we were missing until he came here, and now, things just somehow feel "right" if you know what I mean - whole. Gary's experience working with Atty and learning to understand him have changed him so much for the better. He's a calmer person now. Atticus has shown him how to live for the day and enjoy every moment, because that's what Atty does. You can tell just by watching that he knows that he's home.

Thanks so much, Tracey Mehan & Gary Brewer



**CRANE MOUNTAIN  
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Gail Guenther

*“Crane Mountain  
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## JENNA GIVES NELLIE HOPE



Meet Jenna (left) and Nellie (right). In the basket Jenna holds are some apples, an envelope filled with cash, and hope for a cure for cancer for Nellie.

With the encouragement and backing of her mom and dad, Jenna asked for donations to Crane Mountain Valley Horse Rescue for her 5th birthday, in lieu of gifts for herself.

Jenna raised \$275, the amount Nellie needed to start radiation treatments for squamous cell carcinoma, or skin cancer. The hope is that the treatments will shrink a tumor on Nellie's eyelid so we don't have to remove her left eye.

The mask Nellie is wearing protects her eyes not only from pesky flies, but from ultraviolet rays from the sun, a likely cause of her skin cancer along with a white face and blue eye on that side — fair skin and lighter pigment. Nellie will wear her mask like sunglasses for the rest of her life to help prevent recurrence of the cancer. She actually enjoys wearing it and helps us put it on. We suspect that her blue eye is sensitive to bright light and the mask brings comfort.

We are always inspired by children who give up materials things for themselves to help the horses, and by the parents who encourage them, like Jenna and her mom and dad.

Thanks to Jenna's selfless generosity, Nellie has hope of beating cancer and keeping her eye. She's had three treatments so far and the tumor is shrinking.



Jenna and Nellie. This means “thank you” in horse speak. It is said that a photo is worth 1000 words. This one is.