



**Providing Humane Services in Steuben County**

**7315 State Route 54**

**Bath, New York 14810**

**607-776-3039**

**PRESS RELEASE**

Update in regard to large horse seizure by Finger Lakes SPCA Inc. (in Steuben County) from Middle Creek/Norcrest Farm (Geraldine Trupia, Operator):

It has been eight weeks since Officer Scott Mazzo (Animal Cruelty Investigator for the Finger Lakes SPCA, Inc. (F.L.SPCA) with the assistance of the District Attorney's Office, initiated the seizure of 85 severely neglected horses from 4512 County Route 82 in the town of Troupsburg, New York. Eighty of the horses rescued were able to be placed immediately into SPCA foster care homes to begin their recovery and receive nourishing food, fresh water and long overdue medical and farrier care (not to mention TLC).

The operator (Geraldine Trupia) of the aforementioned farm pleaded guilty to misdemeanor animal cruelty charges October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 in Troupsburg Town Court. Formal sentencing has been slated for November 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 A.M. in the same court. The case still remains open.

Over the past eight weeks, the Finger Lakes SPCA, Inc. has paid out \$24,768 in expenses associated with the care of these needy horses. Medical, hay and grain expenses have been the most significant. The SPCA has received financial contributions designated for this equine protection effort totaling \$23,117. Horse supply donations over the past eight weeks including hay, blankets, grain, wormer, tack, etc. have reached an estimated value of \$16,175.00. In addition to hours and hours of donated time by foster care providers, the SPCA has also received some donations of discounted and in-kind services for medical care, transport, etc. Despite this phenomenal supporter generosity, horse care expenses at this moment are slightly outpacing incoming donations. However, the organization has been notified of the award of two emergency equine grants from the ASPCA of \$5,000 each designated for emergency hay and horse medical care. Receipt of these monies is impending and further fund-raising is ongoing and necessary. We believe months of care still lie ahead for many of these horses who will not be redeemed and while investigation continues & ownership interests are still being determined. It is anticipated that the majority of the horses will remain in the SPCA's care at least over the next few months.

Foster care visits and medical reports continue to document vast improvement in the overall health of the majority of these animals. Horses that could once barely walk or lift their heads and had almost given up on life are showing incredible will to live. Some of these same horses are even trotting about in their pasture and whinnying with happiness and delight at the sight of their foster care provider. Horses once covered with rain rot now have a beautiful shiny coat. Foals once weak and emaciated are now frisking about in their pens. Horses that were once skeletal and underweight are now gaining weight with bones much less prominent. Please refer to attached photos.

Since their rescue and placement into foster care, five horses have perished (all under veterinary care & all with very poor body condition scores upon rescue). Currently, we have 74 horses in foster care.

Since the seizure and tending to the emergency needs of these horses, the SPCA has established and resolved ownership, identification and horse return issues for two horses. Also they are actively communicating with approximately eight other individuals in regard to their ownership/potential ownership (proof of ownership documentation is being sent and received, identification of horses is taking place, horse's ability to travel is being determined, necessary release paperwork is being completed and coordination of arrangements for return of horse(s) is taking place. It is expected that 6-8 horses could be returned to their owners in the upcoming weeks. SPCA officials continue to ask any persons who had horse breeding and/or boarding agreement with Geraldine Trupia to contact the Finger Lakes SPCA, Inc. by calling 607-776-3039 so their inquiries can be processed in a timely manner. Proof of legal ownership is necessary to redeem horses (bill of sale in addition to other paperwork may be required to assure proper identification of horse and rightful ownership).

We cannot thank the donors & volunteers (particularly foster care providers) enough for helping to support the care of these needy horses. We want donors to know that whether your donation was large or small – the horses and volunteers and staff at the Finger Lakes SPCA appreciate it. We, and these horses, still have a long way to go. The outpouring of concern and generosity of so many on behalf of these starved animals is nothing short of admirable and inspiring. However, continuing monetary support, in-kind services & item donations are still needed, as horse care expenses are expected to exceed contributions and fund-raising efforts.

There are many organizations and groups that have been helpful and supportive to the SPCA through this emergency & quite frankly without their efforts (combined with so many other kind supporters and donors who share their concern for these neglected horses) this animal protection effort would not be possible. We would never be able to pay proper thanks to all publicly. However, we would like to recognize some of the lead organizations that have lent significant rescue support to this equine protection effort. They are as follows:

ASPCA, Hornell Area Humane Society, Alfred State College & Students, Tender Mercy Equine Rescue, Maryland Hay Angels, New York State Humane Association, Another Chance for Horses, all foster care providers and rescue personnel.

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