

Auction to raise funds for equine rescue at Corvallis sanctuary



NOVEMBER 08, 2013 6:30 AM • BY [PERRY BACKUS](#)

CORVALLIS – This year so far has been the best ever for finding new homes for horses left in the care of the Corvallis-based Western Montana Equine Rescue and Rehabilitation.

“We’ve had 18 adopted out this year,” said Shannon Alexander, the organization’s founder. “That’s huge for us. And that’s only through the end of October.”

That success brings its own set of challenges.

As more people seek out the horse rescue operation, Alexander said expenses have continued to grow to pay for feed and veterinary services.

In an effort to meet some of those additional expenses, the horse rescue is turning to social media.

Starting today, the organization will host an online auction of items donated from all across the valley on a special Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/WesternMTEquineRescueAuction?ref=hl>

Carole McLaughlin knows how these work.

Before becoming a representative with the horse rescue, McLaughlin spent several years working with another animal organization helping Great Pyrenees dogs find homes.

“They do these quite frequently,” she said. “They work rather well.”

So people associated with the Corvallis operation put the word out that they needed something to sell in order to raise much needed cash.

The response was gratifying.

There are tickets to the sold out Cat/Griz game in Bozeman, a Winchester rifle, jewelry, hand-painted cards, photo sessions, and even several candelabras made from antlers.

People can donate items any time during the weeklong auction.

“People know all about the need here in western Montana,” McLaughlin said. “We get calls daily from people who are having trouble feeding their horses both temporarily or permanently. We are doing our best to be there to help.”

The word has circulated far enough for people to know about the success that Alexander and others have had in helping horses recover from challenging circumstances.

A horse named Dusty provides the perfect example of what can happen with some loving and knowledgeable care.

When Dusty arrived at Alexander’s home earlier this year, no one could be sure he was going to survive. The horse was horribly underweight and his teeth, hooves, coat had been completely neglected.

“He was in really bad shape when we got him,” Alexander said. “He had such a severe heart murmur that we couldn’t even get his teeth floated. We just had to focus on giving him food that he was able to eat.”

After three months, he looked like a new horse. Today, Dusty has been adopted by the veterinarian, who lives in Missoula.

Alexander has seen a number of success stories like Dusty, but sometimes horses arrive that are just too old or too difficult to maintain for anyone to adopt.

“Right now, we have about 10 sanctuary horses – ones that people probably don’t want to adopt – that we’ll keep until they die,” Alexander said. “We hope that we can find sponsors for those horses.”

The hope is that groups of people might come together to sponsor a horse.

“Maybe a group in an office of 10 people can donate \$50 a month to sponsor one horse,” Alexander said. “Most people can afford \$5 a month toward a good cause. We hope people will consider that too.”

To learn more about the horse rescue operation and see some of the horses cared for by the rescue operation, people can go to <http://www.westernmontanaequinerescue.org>