

Options for Ex-Racehorses

There are a number of groups working to help racehorses find another career—or just good homes—after racing

Only a handful of racehorses continue racing for more than a few years. The most talented runners are retired to stud or join a broodmare band, but often horses must move out to make room for new prospects. The problem of what to do with ex-racehorses is ongoing, and several organizations have been created to help resolve this.

THOROUGHBRED RETIREMENT FOUNDATION

The Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation (TRF) has been in existence the longest, founded by Monique Koehler in New Jersey in 1982. In 1983, she made an agreement with the New York State Department of Corrections to establish a 50-acre farm at its medium security Wallkill Correc-

tional Facility. Inmates renovated an old dairy barn and built paddocks to create space for 40 horses, and they learned to care for them in a state-accredited curriculum developed by the TRF.

Since then the program has expanded to correctional facilities in several states. In 1989, TRF also began boarding retired Thoroughbreds at private farms, and it has participating farms in Connecticut, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Virginia. In 1996, the TRF amended its charter to allow placement of horses in adoptive homes, equine education programs, and therapeutic riding programs. The TRF has three retraining facilities to prepare horses for adoption.

Diana Pikulski has been executive director of TRF since 1997. “We learned that our rate of adoption is higher and success rate is better if the horses are retrained first. We can also match the horses with prospective adopters,” she said.

“We now have seven prison farms with 1,215 horses we feed every day and 600 horses adopted to private homes,” said Pikulski. “This is our 25th anniversary. We signed a contract in March to open our eighth correctional facility farm, in Maryland, and have a contract pending with Pennsylvania for our ninth. We can’t fill the demand fast enough for the needs of the horses and of correctional facilities and equine therapy programs that want to use retired horses.”

She believes these complementary programs are the future of the movement to help ex-racehorses. “The need for horses in therapeutic riding is growing; more people are discovering the positive results of horses helping people,” she said. “Thoroughbreds are a good match for these programs; they are sensitive, already accustomed to people (after being handled every day of their lives), and very aware of the people working with them. They give patients the feedback needed in the therapy process.

“We’ve also made great strides in our partnership with the racing industry,” she continued. “At Suffolk Downs (in East Boston, Mass.), we take horses that leave the track at the end of that meet and don’t have any place to go. The track and the horsemen provide funding. We’re working on the same kind of program with other



COURTESY NEW VOCATIONS

Retired racehorse Crown Royal King receives transitional training at New Vocations

tracks for this fall when racing starts to slow down in the Northeast."

Some people who adopt ex-racehorses use them in sport horse/show competition or pleasure riding. "We don't have enough sound horses to fill that demand," said Pikulski. "We're trying to work with trainers and owners to get horses off the track sooner, rather than after they break down."

"In New York, there's a new development with the recent Governor's Task Force on racing," she said. "This was born out of legislation demanding the issue be dealt with. It's the first time we've had government entities (the governor's office, Department of Agriculture, Racing, and Wagering Board) partnering with horse people to address the problem of what to do with all these horses when they're done racing in an organized fashion."

The TRF continually works at getting the horses and their needs in the public eye. The Maker's Mark Secretariat Center at Kentucky Horse Park was developed through a partnership with Keeneland, Maker's Mark distillery, and the TRF. "There, we showcase other rescue organizations and their horses for adoption, as well as TRF horses," said Pikulski. "This is an opportunity to show the qualities and

abilities of the Thoroughbred in all disciplines of riding and equine therapy."

Through the Thoroughbred Adoption Network (thoroughbredadoption.com), any charity/rescue organization that offers ex-racehorses for adoption can put horses on this Web site, which can be checked by people looking for horses to adopt. "It's like Petfinders (Petfinder.com), and very successful," said Pikulski.

In another program, called Pony Up, trainers and owners of Thoroughbred racehorses can give a certain amount per win to TRF. "On average, it's \$50 per win," she said.

One of the TRF's most popular programs is sponsorship, in which a person can "own" a horse without taking it home. "Sponsorships are often given as gifts and people come to visit their horses regularly," said Pikulski. "It's wonderful to see how attached people get to their sponsored horses."

For more information visit trfinc.org, call (518) 226-0028, or e-mail Pikulski at diana@trfinc.org.

NEW VOCATIONS

In Ohio, Dot Morgan started a racehorse adoption program in 1992 after working

with racehorses most of her life and as a 4-H adviser for 10 years. "Many horses were going to the killers after they could no longer race," said Morgan. "I knew from my experience with 4-H that there are a lot of people with experience to handle horses and a good place to keep one, but unable to spend several thousand dollars to buy a horse."

She started with a small ad in *The Blood-Horse*: "Don't let your horse go to the killers. I will take your discards and fulfill someone's dream." She got four horses from that ad, and it grew from there.

"I placed horses this way for seven years," said Morgan. Then in 1998, an owner/breeder from Massachusetts encouraged her to incorporate as a 501(c)(3) charity, saying she could help a lot more horses if donors could take them as tax deductions. The number of horses she placed went from 30-40 per year to more than 300. New Vocations has placed more than 2,000 horses in 37 states.

One of her goals is to help at-risk youth. "We developed an inner city 4-H club to bring kids from Dayton (Ohio) and teach them about horses, life goals, and directions," said Morgan. "Now we work with West Central Ohio Juvenile Center, using

Body Builder™ ← Natural Alternative to Steroids...

The First, and Still the Best, for over 17 Years!

Works so well that others try to replicate it.

DON'T BE FOOLED!!!

They do not use the same quality of ingredients.

BODY BUILDER is cheaper because of the dosage and obvious results!

Bottom line **BODY BUILDER** was the first and is still the best. *Our Secret?* We use the highest quality ingredients and have a proprietary, unique way of mixing them. So what? The key is absorption! Without that, you don't get what you want, no matter what you add, no matter how many more ingredients are used.

We get the best possible ingredients and pay nearly 3X as much for them. It is that simple. That is why just 15 ccs (one tablespoon) daily does the trick.

One Bottle + One Horse + Two Months = OUTSTANDING RESULTS!!



For the money, there is no better supplement with faster turn around results than **BODY BUILDER!**

17 years of repeat customers prove it. From yearling and 2-year-old prep to race horses and competition horses, to broodmares and stallions. Yep, it works for all.

**TRY IT! YOU WILL LOVE IT!!
GUARANTEED!**

**EQUIADE
PRODUCTS**

1-800-413-3702
(201) 568-5551
(201) 568-0084 fax
www.equiade.com

Available in various catalogs and at your local tack shops and veterinarians. Also approved in many countries.





the plight of retired racehorses to encourage youth to set worthy goals.”

At New Vocations, horses are evaluated under saddle to determine temperament, suitability, and soundness. “We try to screen out the ones not sound enough to be ridden,” she said. “These horses are going to new careers, not retirement homes. It’s hard to find people who will make a long-term commit-

ment to a horse that can’t be used. Many of the horses that go through our program have injuries, but will recover enough to be useful; they just need time.”

Anna Ford has been New Vocations’ program director for the past seven years, involved in the adoption of more than 1,000 Thoroughbreds. She recently wrote a book called *Beyond the Track: Transitioning the Retired Thoroughbred from Racehorse to Riding Horse*.

“We need to let people know there’s an option for these horses,” said Morgan. “It’s been hard getting horses adopted this year. The hay shortage in the South and Midwest has been a factor. We work hard at evaluating, photographing, and marketing these horses—as though they are high-end individuals rather than unwanted. We have online videos of most of the horses. To encourage adoptions our average fee was only \$225 in 2007, with many horses offered free. If a horse isn’t adopted within a month, we put more time into it, with photos of it under saddle, jumping, walking over a bridge—showing what it can do. We determine its strong points and promote them.”

New Vocations’ skilled personnel—a veterinarian, equine specialist, world

“Our support is mainly from caring individuals, Thoroughbred Charities of America, Blue Horse Charities, and fund-raisers. There’s talk within the industry about the importance of taking care of these horses, but little action from the entities that can most afford it.

“New Vocations would like to take more horses that need stall rest to recover from bowed tendons, bone chips, etc.,” she continued. “We often have to turn down horses that aren’t sound enough to begin transitioning. If we had the funds, we’d open a division for rehab, where a horse could go for several months to heal.”

For more information about New Vocations, contact Anna Ford at (614) 771-6825 or visit horseadoption.com.

UNITED PEGASUS FOUNDATION

Helen Meredith has been involved with racehorses all her life, starting in England and France. She traveled to California in 1989, where her husband, Derek, is a Thoroughbred trainer. Meredith started the Pegasus program because she noticed many horses ended up going to slaughter when their racing careers were over; she’s been placing horses in new homes since 1994.

“Our mission is to help as many Thoroughbreds as we can,” said Meredith. “Originally, we had farms at Hemet and Tehachapi (in California), but we were leasing the Hemet property, and when it was sold, we regrouped everything at Tehachapi. Some of the horses are rehabilitated and retrained, but most are total retirees, not sound enough to go to new homes. Before a horse is adopted, Pegasus guarantees it’s healed to the best of



COURTESY CENTER MID-ATLANTIC

Rescued 15-year-old gelding Clever Ma now competes in eventing

champion equestrian, national champion equestrian, and a professional hunter/jumper trainer—are familiar with racing injuries and what the prognosis will be. “Our experience helps us determine whether a horse will be able to do dressage, jumping, trail riding, endurance, 4-H, or just be a backyard horse,” she said. They match horses with adopters.

But the number of horses needing homes is outpacing the number of people willing to take them. Keeping adoption fees low means spending more effort raising funds to run the program.

“We need more support from racetracks and breed organizations,” said Morgan.

its ability, and some are ready for another career.


“It may not be sound enough for three-day eventing, but may be fine for less strenuous competition,” she said. “Quite a few are out there jumping.

“We have 68 Thoroughbreds right now, but not many for adoption because we haven’t been taking in horses lately; we’re trying to downsize,” she said.


United Pegasus Foundation depends on donations and volunteer help, but it also relies on some paid employees because the organization takes care of so many horses. Costs have gone up, with workers’ compensation and insurance and the

Every Breath Counts!

Ammonia destroys your racehorses’ chance to succeed.




Toxic and noxious ammonia odor prohibits your equine athletes from performing their best. It can severely restrict their endurance, stamina and performance. Protect your horses’ respiratory health with **Sweet PDZ**, because every race counts. Every breath counts!



Non-Toxic • All Natural Environmentally Friendly

For more info or a dealer near you:
800-367-1534 • www.sweetpdz.com



price of hay in California.

"Unless we get more financial support soon, we're in trouble," said Meredith. "Early last year we paid \$5,200 per load for hay, and are now paying \$7,200 per load, and the price of diesel is still going up."

Most of the horses on their farm are between 20 and 30 years old. "We haven't been taking in as many as we used to because most of the ones we get are retirees that can't go on to a second career," she explained. "This means we continually accumulate them, and right now we don't have the finances to do that."

"We've been writing grants and doing fund-raisers, but our overhead is high—and, unfortunately, there are more horses that need our help," said Meredith. "There are about 35,000 foals registered every year with The Jockey Club, so there are 35,000 going out the door somewhere at the end of their career. There are more than 2,000 a year in California coming off the track, needing some place to go. There's no organization that can keep up with that amount of horses per year. Even if you rehab them for adoption, it often takes a year to retrain them and send them back out. If they are not adoptable, they become permanent retirees, and you can only take in so many of those."

"In California, we're supposed to have a voluntary retirement fund; each owner signs up and 0.03% of any purse money would go into this fund," she said. "Each state should be doing more to help their Thoroughbreds."

One problem is that retired horses live so long. "When we first started rescuing them in 1994, some couldn't be adopted, and they make up the bulk of what we've still got," she explained. "They are now between their 20s and 30s."

Many were acquired through purchase from auctions and feedlots. Others were donated. "As long as there's racing, the problem will be ongoing; there will always be horses out there needing to go somewhere, needing help," added Meredith.

For more information on United Pegasus Foundation, contact Helen Meredith at (626) 279-1306 or visit unitedpegasus.com.

RERUN

ReRun was created in 1996 in Kentucky. Horses are donated, and owners get a tax benefit by giving the horses away. "We have chapters in New York, Kentucky, and New Jersey," said Sue Swart, treasurer of the organization. "We also have 'foster mom' homes in several states; they often take a horse when our chapter farms are overcrowded."

ReRun usually has 35 to 45 horses available for adoption or sponsorship. When a horse arrives, it is evaluated for tem-

Sale Topping Results!



\$1,500,000
\$800,000
\$650,000
\$610,000
\$550,000
\$380,000
\$325,000

A few 2008 sales prices of horses prepared on MyBeau PRO!

mybeau
NATURAL NUTRITION

www.AmericanMyBeau.com

704-587-3300



lucasequine.com



Lucas Equine Equipment, Inc.

Custom equine doors, gates, grills

859.234.6920 toll free 888.577.6920 Cynthiana, KY



perament and ability. If there's a health issue, ReRun keeps the horse until it is healthy and sound. There's an adoption fee if the horse is rideable. Adopters sign a two-year contract stating they'll keep the horse and care for it two years. Twice a year, a ReRun representative checks on the horse, and required documentation signed by a veterinarian verifies the horse is in good health. If all goes well after two years, the adopter owns the horse. If, for some reason, the person is unable to keep

the horse two years, the horse returns to ReRun.

"Some horses are labeled as non-riding," said Swart. "Adoption fees may be as low as \$1, but the person taking them makes the same two-year contract. This ensures the horse has a good environment before it's sold to someone else. We don't release The Jockey Club papers; returning to racing is never an option.

"It's a sad truth that half the horses in our program are just companion animals because they can't be ridden," she said. "Some have been with us for years. We're not a retirement program or sanctuary; we

try to place them with new owners. But some were in a horrible place and we took them for that reason, or they were misrepresented and we realized after we got them that they are unadoptable or will never be sound.

"It's hard to raise enough money to keep going," said Swart. "We're getting one-third the money we were getting eight years ago. We raise money with our eBay shop and special promotions several times a year. New Jersey is hosting their eighth annual ReRun Horse Show. We have booths at racetracks in Kentucky, New Jersey, and New York during prominent races. In states where people sponsor and keep a ReRun horse, we are grateful for assistance that veterinarians and farriers give those horses. Although the economy is strained, we've always had a good relationship with the professionals and are thankful for services they offer us.

"We struggle financially to help the horses we do, and it's frustrating to have to turn away some we can't help," she said.

For more information about ReRun, visit rerun.org or call (732) 521-1370 or (315) 440-6823.

CANTER

Communication Alliance to Network Thoroughbred Ex-Racehorses (CANTER) started in 1997 when Michigan trainers and owners asked Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (HBPA) board member Jo Anne Normile if she knew of any buyers for retiring horses. They wanted the horses to go to good homes rather than end up at slaughter.

Normile set up a Web site where horses could be listed for sale, with a photo of each horse. The site also had a "wanting to purchase" section, where prospective buyers listed what they were looking for.

Normile bought some horses herself with donated money—horses that had to be immediately removed from the track (they were injured or in situations where a trainer or owner had to sell a horse and couldn't wait for response from Web listings). CANTER bought any horse, sound or unsound, for \$400 to \$700, gave any medical attention at its own expense, often with donated medical services, then resold the horse at the original purchase price to replace the fund to buy another horse. Michigan State University donates surgeries—including castration—for CANTER horses.

Now there are chapters in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New England, and the Mid-Atlantic. Nancy Koch, who started the Ohio chapter eight years ago, manages CANTER and said the number of horses going through the program keeps increasing. Today, many are donated because more people are aware that these

Three Easy Steps.

Four Healthy Hooves.



Farrier's Formula®

The Original
Hoof Supplement since 1983

Farrier's Formula®
Hoof Supplement

Life Data
Hoof Disinfectant®

The Right Step®
Hoof Conditioner and Dressing



Life Data Labs Inc.
12290 Hwy 72
Cherokee, Al. 35616

Life Data®
LABS, INC.

Tel. 256-370-7555
cservice@lifedatalabs.com
www.LifeDataLabs.com

Problems with Birds?

QUADBLASTER QB-4





BLAST BIRDS AWAY WITH ULTRASONIC FULL-CIRCLE ATTACK

- Keep birds out of stables, barns and foaling areas.
- Eliminate dangerous diseases.
- Birds leave and don't come back.

World's most complete line of bird control products - an effective solution for ANY bird problem.

300 N. ELIZABETH ST.
CHICAGO, IL 60607 • DEPT. BHS
312-BAN-BIRD • FAX 312-226-2480

800-662-5021
BIRD-X
WWW.BIRD-X.COM/BHS



THE BIRD CONTROL "X-PERTS" SINCE 1964

horses can go to second careers.

"This is a nice change, and we're grateful," said Koch. "Since we are an all-volunteer operation, this means we can put more money into housing and caring for horses while preparing them for new homes, instead of having to buy so many (of the horses)."

Chris Colflesh is in charge of the Ohio chapter, serving two tracks—Beulah Park and Thistledown. "Right now, we're desperate for funds, with high prices for gas and hay," she said. "We've increased our fund-raising and applying for grants from animal welfare foundations. We get money from Thoroughbred Charities of America and Blue Horse Charities and are tremendously grateful. We got money last year from the Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust for surgeries and vet care for horses in Ohio; two of our horses had surgery last year to remove knee chips."

The Fans of Barbaro (FOB) helped CANTER purchase a horse named Canaletto who's up for adoption. "He was bred in Great Britain and ended his racing career here," said Colflesh. "We contacted the owner when we saw the horse was no longer running well. The owner appreciated being able to sell Canaletto to an organization where the horse would have a future. We contacted the FOB and they came up with the money.

"We also have Fax a Freddy (a 1997 chestnut gelding)—the Ohio-bred 3-year-old male of the year who earned \$400,000 in his racing career," said Colflesh. "He's now on a farm being co-sponsored by CANTER and the Exceller Fund. We're looking for sponsors for Freddy. He raced past the age where he'd be able to do anything else."


Koch said, "CANTER is not a retirement program; we're a placement agency, matching buyers with sellers or finding homes for donated horses—doing whatever's necessary to give a horse options for another career. We're the first line of defense for these horses because we have volunteers on the track backside, connecting buyers and sellers. Our volunteers tell trainers and owners that if their horse is still sound, it's easier for CANTER to help them find the horse a new career, rather than waiting until the only option is retirement.

"We've partnered with retirement nonprofit groups for special horses like Fax a Freddy, but we're focused on educating trainers and owners about parting with their horses sooner," said Koch. "It adds value to the horse and is better for everyone, especially the horse."

CANTER can help "fix" the ones that need help to become sound, whether the horse needs time or surgery. "But the majority of our horses are placed on-site, right off the track," said Koch. "CANTER is a

source to help people find horses, and for people who want to adopt or retire one at their own expense. They know that every horse they take means we can bring another one in. Jo Anne Normile started a

tremendous gift for these horses. We hope to keep that gift going."

For more information, visit canterusa.org or call Chris Colflesh at (614) 266-3975 or Nancy Koch at (330) 697-4460. 

PAVESAFE™

Where the Champions Walk




Ultimate Rubber Surfacing For:

- Paddock Areas
- Barn Aisleways
- Tunnels
- Horse Paths
- Winners Circle
- Wash and Grooming Stalls

In use at Stonestreet, Fasig-Tipton, Adena Springs, Keeneland, Churchill Downs, and Kentucky Horse Park.




Louisiana Downs

Dandy Products, Inc.

3314 St. Rt. 131 • Goshen, OH 45122 • 513-625-3000 • fax 513-623-2600
www.dandyproductsinc.com

THOSE WHO KNOW PULL A TURNBOW

PROUDLY SERVING THE INDUSTRY FOR 48 YEARS

TURNBOW'S COMMERCIAL HAULING TRAILER




Hauls horses head-to-head or converts to box stalls.



TURNBOW TRAILERS, INC.

P. O. Box 300 • Oilton, OK 74052
 (918) 862-3233 • 1-800-362-5659 • Fax (918) 862-3803
 E-mail: info@turnbowtrailers.com
 Internet: www.turnbowtrailers.com

CALL 1-800-362-5659 FOR MORE INFORMATION



EQUINE HEALTH CARE PRODUCTS & NEWS

CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY'S EQUINE PRODUCTS

Cutting Edge Technology's equine products contain highly-absorbable minerals, vital trace minerals, high levels of vitamins, and six sources of iron to deliver essential nutrients to your horse.

The Edge water additive is a metabolic efficiency catalyst that promotes optimum nutrient absorption, while employing a phenomenal cellular delivery sys-



tem. This proprietary formula decreases viral, bacterial, fungal, and parasitic pressures as it increases hemoglobin levels and red blood cell delivery.

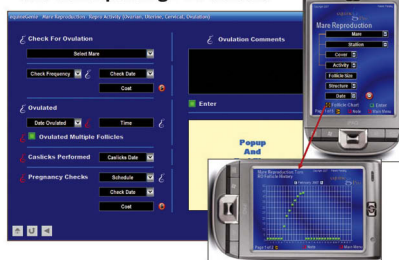
EQ-180 cleans the digestive track in its entirety all the way down to the epithelial wall of the small intestine, restores optimum absorption in the small intestine, and uses the specific forms of iron and other elements to build the red blood cell count.

For more information on CET products, visit www.cetequine.com or call Anne Walkup (859) 396-4408.

GENIECO'S HORSE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS PACKAGE

GenieCo has introduced a totally new concept in equine management software with equinegenie, a comprehensive and easy-to-use program that can be customized to users' specific requirements and individual entries to manage all aspects of their horses, business operations, financial planning, reporting, and analysis.

Mare Reproduction Activity Screen and Corresponding PDA Screens



For more information, visit www.genieatwork.com or call (888) 678-4364

LIFE DATA LABS' BARN BAG FEED CONCENTRATE

Barn Bag Pleasure and Performance Horse Feed Concentrate is designed to replace compounded/full feeds. Barn Bag provides the horse with optimum nutrition when fed with hay and pasture diets. Hay or pasture provides bulk, and oats can be added for extra energy. This feeding system allows the horse owner to "take control" of his equine feeding program by separating energy requirements from nutrient requirements.

For additional information, contact Life Data Labs at (800) 624-1873 or visit www.lifedatalabs.com.

NEW COMPLETE WOUND AND TRAUMA BANDAGE PACK

The Complete Wound and Trauma Bandage Pack offers the convenience of having the hard-to-get bandage supplies at your fingertips in a sealed pack. It is designed for emergency situations or for everyday bandage changes.

It provides the same top-of-the-line bandage supplies that are used at veterinary hospitals. Large or small injuries can be treated with this complete pack.

The premium quality trauma pack can be used for people and horses, as well as all other types animals.

For more information, call America's Acres Safety Products & Equipment (888) 250-5151 or visit www.americasacres.com.



WORLD'S FIRST BIRD-DETERRENT LASER FOR INDOOR USE

Bird-X has announced the world's first indoor-use bird deterrent laser. It combats the expense, unsightliness, and disease associated with birds and their droppings.

The Bird BLazer uses state-of-the-art "fat beam" laser technology, in dozens of constantly-changing patterns to disrupt pigeons, sparrows, starlings, swallows, and other birds. The beam covers up to 16,000 square feet.

The Bird BLazer is the newest product in the Bird-X line of environmentally friendly bird and pest control products, which include sonic and ultrasonic repellents, visual scare devices, physical roost inhibitors, and taste aversion chemicals.

For more information, contact Trunita Robinson or Mona Zemsky at Bird-X (800) 662-5021, e-mail: trobenson@bird-x.com, or visit www.bird-x.com.



Product information supplied by companies. Inclusion in this section does not imply endorsement. To submit a product for possible inclusion in this section, write to The Blood-Horse, Products, P.O. Box 919003, Lexington, Ky. 40591-9003; or e-mail spartridge@blood-horse.com. Please include a photo or logo with your submission.