



# Montana HORSE SANCTUARY

November 2014

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## *Happy Holidays to all our Horse-Loving Friends!*

The Sanctuary celebrated its 10th "birthday" this year. This is a major milestone for the horses and donkeys who depend on generous supporters like you. At this point, we are the longest-standing nonprofit horse/donkey sanctuary in Montana. Others have come and gone but our gates are still open. The economic crisis stretched resources nearly to the breaking point in the past few years, but because of you and your generous support the horses and donkeys have remained well cared-for and healthy.

As we move forward, we will use what we have learned from our first 10 years. Most importantly we must continue to understand our strengths and our limitations; no single organization can do it all. We will continue to wisely spend the money you invest in the Sanctuary and will continue to work collaboratively with other horse people and organizations.



Mini-donkey, Jazz, pauses for a moment next to her friend, Sally.



Farrier Josh Bidlack makes sure the horses and donkeys have balanced feet.



Professional trainer Jess Holloway shows off Roxanne's new skills - Roxanne is ready for her forever home.

### **WHERE WE HAVE BEEN**

The Sanctuary began in 2004 with a team of four horse people who wanted to realize their dream of rescuing, sheltering, rehabilitating and rehoming abused and in-crisis horses. The Sanctuary was originally located near Helena on 20 acres. In 2009, the Sanctuary moved to a ranch near Simms (30 miles west of Great Falls).

Today, the board consists of: Co-Founder Jane Heath of Simms as president, Brenda York of Bozeman as vice-president and Shanna Chism of Sun River as secretary. All of us are avid horsewomen with a lifetime of horse experience. Jane and her husband live next door to the Sanctuary and do daily horse care and ranch chores. Shanna and Brenda are strong team members who bring energetic participation, leadership and board membership experience to the Sanctuary.

### **WHERE WE ARE GOING**

We achieved, and in many cases exceeded, most of the goals in our original 10-year plan. The Sanctuary board has begun the process of creating a strategic plan for the next 10 years. The new plan will include expanded workshop and educational opportunities, led by Brenda York. Shanna Chism, whose career is law enforcement, will lead us forward in developing new and more effective ways to support local law enforcement during abuse cases and seizures. Jane Heath, a professional equine rehabilitation therapist, continually employs new methods to improve the horse sheltering and rehabilitation program helping the Sanctuary horses and donkeys in their healing process.

Specific projects planned for the next 10 years include building a new office/barn building. Currently the Sanctuary office is housed in a very old, decaying building next door to the Sanctuary. The Sanctuary's barn is too small and the ceiling is too low for safe horse use. More pastures will be enclosed with horse-safe fence and put to use for grazing. We plan to convert another pasture to hay ground. We are working on an improved website and Facebook page.

The most important and pivotal next step is raising funds for a paid staff position. Without a full-time professional we cannot move forward and achieve our goals. While our volunteer board and other volunteers are priceless, we need a full-time professional to take our plans and fundraising through the next decade. This person will help the Sanctuary increase its capacity to help horses and donkeys.

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## THE RANCH MORTGAGE

The ranch mortgage totals \$700,000 including interest. The ranch is now 33% paid off leaving us with about \$439,000 left to pay off in 10 years. It is because of generous supporters that we have been able to make every payment on time, and in full. Your contribution makes it possible for the horses and donkeys to find security and constant care here.

## PENNY FINDS HER FOREVER HOME

Penny, a 28-year-old quarter horse mare was adopted this summer! She came to the Sanctuary in 2012 as part of an abused herd seized by Cascade County. A kind woman fell in love with Penny, and Penny fell in love with her. The woman wanted a horse with experience and a quiet temperament. She wasn't put off by Penny's advanced years, but instead was awed by Penny's springy step and friendly manner. Jane visited Penny at her new home recently and she is clearly in horse "heaven-on-earth."

## HELPING BROADWATER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

On March 12, the Broadwater County Sheriff's Office in Townsend seized 28 horses, one donkey, one hinny (a mini-mule) and five goats from the Rocky Acres facility near Townsend. The owners were charged with multiple counts of animal cruelty and the case is making its way slowly through the legal system. Meanwhile, the seized equines are being held in protective custody. Many were near starvation but are recovering nicely, thanks to the dedicated care provided by volunteers and professionals.

The Sanctuary has provided support to the sheriff's office in the form of hay, de-wormer, and volunteers who help care for the horses. Additionally, we helped the sheriff's office write a grant that resulted in an award of \$14,500 from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The Sanctuary is still collecting donations for the rescued animals. If you would like your donation directed to the Rocky Acres equines, please note that on your donation envelope or visit the donation page at our website: [montanahorsesanctuary.org](http://montanahorsesanctuary.org).

## HELP THE HORSES CELEBRATE 10 YEARS!

Perhaps you would like to give \$10 or a multiple of 10: \$50, \$100, \$250... Let your imagination and generosity guide you. You can even direct your gift to sponsor a horse, honor the life of someone you love, memorialize a horse friend or... you decide. If you need help deciding, give us a call at 406-264-5300, and we can discuss options with you. Or email the Sanctuary office: [info@montanahorsesanctuary.org](mailto:info@montanahorsesanctuary.org). You can contribute by check or at the DonateNow page on our website. It's quick, easy and really helps!

Visit our online giftshop and like our Facebook page: We have a new online giftshop with Sanctuary t-shirts, caps, notecards and more. Check it out at [www.montanahorsesanctuary.org](http://www.montanahorsesanctuary.org) and find just the right gift for that horse-loving friend or even for yourself. All proceeds go towards horse care. Find and like us on Facebook where you can get all the latest news.

Remember, we can't help horses without you, our trusted supporters! You make everything happen at the Sanctuary. No matter the amount, all donations are deeply appreciated.



Tino enjoys a quiet afternoon grazing.  
Photo by Kim Michels



Tino in his winter coat  
Photo by Tamar Kasberg

*Have a wonderful holiday season  
and a terrific New Year!*

*Jane Heath*  
Jane Heath  
President

*Brenda K. York*  
Brenda K. York  
Vice President

*Shanna Bulik-Chism*  
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