

Horses now have happy homes

By Roseanne Espino
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There are some local people who have adopted or provide foster homes for rescued horses with the help of The Bluebonnet Equine Humane Society. Margaret Drake, of Glen Rose, has adopted 2 beautiful Arabians who had been a part of 58 horses seized in Hopkins County, Texas, in May, 2009. Margaret decided to adopt rescue horses because she has rescued dogs and had a strong passion about helping all unwanted animals her entire life. Miss Ellie is a gentle and beautiful horse and Margaret says Miss Ellie's disposition is very sweet.

Susan Wilson, of Eulogy, fosters rescue horses and is on the Board of Directors of The Bluebonnet Equine Humane Society. Susan says she has always had a passion for horses and had been involved in rescue of companion animals, so this was a natural thing for her. She currently has four foster horses in addition to her own four horses. They are Ad-

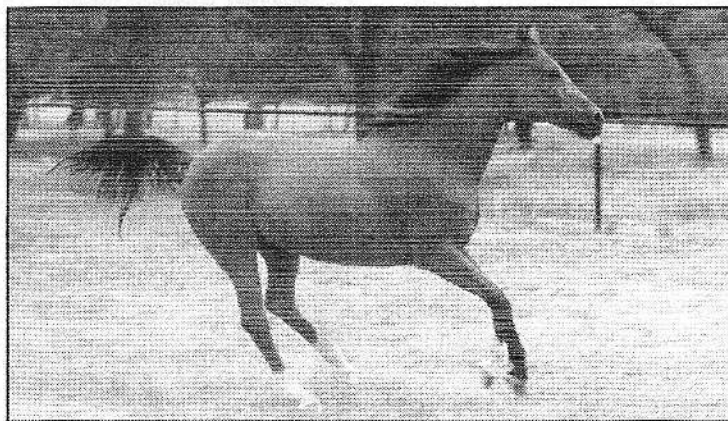
iva, a 7 year old bay Arab mare who was in the same herd as Margaret's horses, Lone Starlett and Sundance Kidd, two quarter-type sorrel yearlings and Latte, a cremello mare. Adiva, who was part of a seizure in Johnson County, won the BEHS training challenge at their Expo last fall.

In the last 12 years, she has had 12 foster horses. Susan commented, "It is especially gratifying to take in a malnourished "untouchable" and to witness the transformation some groceries and attention can make." She went on to say, "The only obstacle or downside I encounter is the realization that currently we must turn away horses in need due to insufficient number of foster homes and resources."

The Bluebonnet Equine Humane Society is an organization which rescues horses and other equines throughout Texas and Arkansas who are neglected and or abused. The state of Texas defines abuse as 'unnecessarily depriving an animal of food, water or necessary care. Also horses that are overworked or beaten may also be considered abused'.

The BEHS was founded in March, 2005, by a group of horse enthusiasts who saw a need in the area of horse rescue. The Society has over 600 members. BEHS works with law enforcement officials throughout the state to investigate reports of neglected, abused or abandoned horses, educate owners and remove and rehabilitate horses.

BEHS has worked with between 50 and 60 counties, shelters and cities. Some have con-



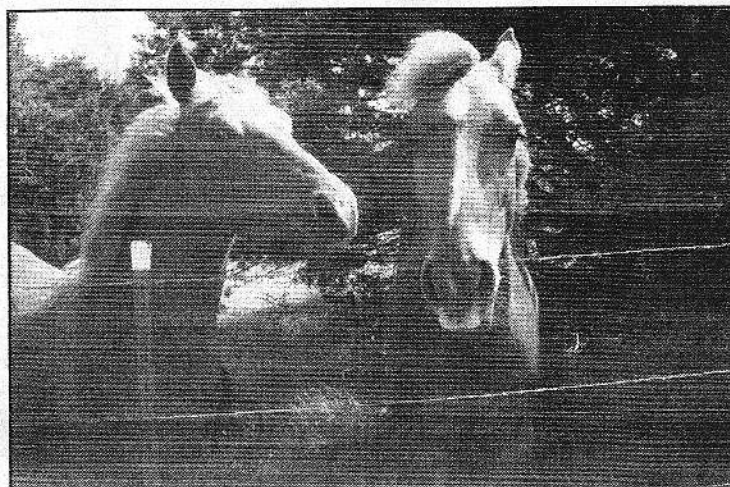
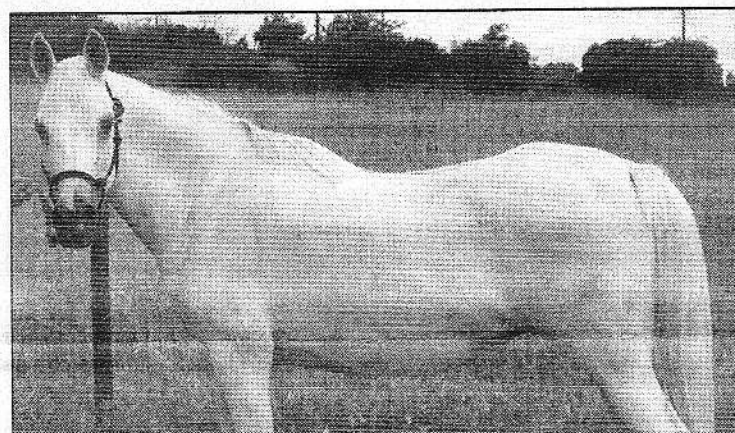
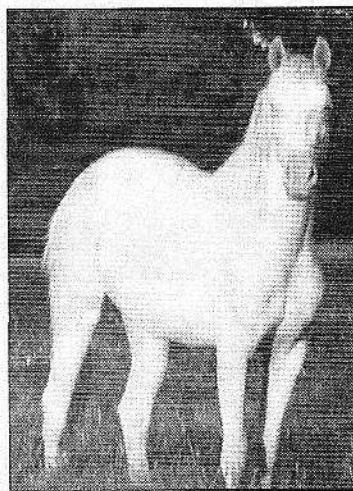
tacted the group directly and some were contacted by them. In one case, BEHS provided hay for another rescue's seizure of 125 equines and the organization took the lead in the seizure of 58 horses in Hopkins County, Texas, in May, 2009. This was the seizure that Margaret Drake's horses and one of Susan Wilson's horses were rescued.

To date the BEHS has taken in over 450 horses and placed nearly 300 with adopters. On their website at www.bluebonnetequine.org they state, "We firmly believe that if you teach people to take care of their horses, you can decrease neglect due to ignorance. The increase in abandoned horses is due to a combination of the economy and severe drought that plagued much of Texas in 2009. With the higher price of hay and people losing jobs and taking pay cuts, more people have been unable to afford feeding their animals."

The BEHS is primarily a volunteer-run group. They have room for everyone, whether you have a lot of horse experience or just like horses in general. There is also a foster program where horses are placed with BEHS members to be cared for and rehabilitated until a permanent home is found.

Fundraising is a necessary part of the Society with the major event for BEHS is the Bluebonnet Horse Expo held annually in Austin, Texas. They are able to showcase the foster horses available for adoption and educate the public with clinicians, riding demonstrations and a "Parade of Breeds" BEHS members also set up booths at area expos and horse shows to promote awareness of horse adoption, attract membership and raise funds from donations and sales of certain items.

For anyone interested in the Bluebonnet Equine Humane Society go to www.bluebonnetequine.org for more information.



Top left: Latte. Bottom left: Miss Ellie. Top Right: Adiva. Bottom Right: Double Trouble! These horses are just a few of the rescued equine that are happy and healthy