

NATIONAL AWARD FEATURES EQUINE VOICES

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The acclaimed horse rescue in Southern Arizona - **Equine Voices Rescue & Sanctuary** - played the feature role in a nationally broadcast network news report recently honored for calling critical attention to animal welfare and protection issues.

The news report - aired July 20, 2011 on NBC Nightly News by anchor Brian Williams - **won a prestigious Humane Society of the United States Genesis Award** at a star-studded gala ceremony held March 24 in Beverly Hills, Calif.

NBC featured Equine Voices Rescue & Sanctuary in detailing the severe abuse suffered by horses used in illegal drug smuggling across the US-Mexico border, and Equine Voices' vital role in rescuing these animals. The Genesis Awards have been given annually for the past 26 years to spotlight outstanding efforts by news and entertainment media that raise public awareness of animal issues. "We pay tribute to an amazing array of works that address animal protection concerns, but the real winners...are the animals themselves, who rely on these invaluable voices to speak for them," says Beverly Kaskey, senior director of The HSUS's Hollywood Outreach program and executive producer of the annual Genesis Awards.

After learning of the award highlighting Equine Voices' work, Equine Voices founder Karen Pomroy said, "We were thrilled to learn that NBC won the award for the piece they produced on Equine Voices, and we were happy to know the topic of using horses in the illegal drug smuggling trade garnered national attention. After all, education is the key to change."

In introducing the award-winning report, NBC News anchor Brian Williams said, "We end our broadcast tonight with a story about people who are giving some magnificent creatures a second chance at a good life. We hear a lot about the human toll in the drug trade between the U.S. and Mexico. We don't hear much about the animals who are pressed into this duty and this dirty business and then abandoned when smugglers no longer need their services. Our report tonight (is) about an organization that is making a difference for these noble creatures."

NBC News filmed the segment at the Equine Voices Rescue & Sanctuary in Amado - known as the Jumpin' Jack Ranch - now the home of 48 horses rescued from slaughter or slow death due to neglect, starvation, abandonment and abuse. Equine Voices was formed eight years ago to save mares and foals used and discarded for slaughter in the manufacture of the hormone Premarin, made from the urine of pregnant horses.

But as the world economy crashed and border violence and smuggling escalated, Equine Voices has expanded its mission to rescue horses crippled and discarded in the drug trade, as well as those suffering neglect and abandonment by owners who can no longer afford to care for them. Since 2004, more than 500 horses have been pre-placed and/or rescued, with 413 adopted to new homes.

Among other HSUS Genesis Award winners this year are:

The feature film "Rise of the Planet of the Apes" for its examination of the ethics of using chimpanzees in medical research.

"The Ellen DeGeneres Show" for an informative interview with HSUS President and CEO Wayne Pacelle about dog fighting and puppy mills.

The Morgan Freeman-narrated IMAX documentary, "Born to be Wild 3D" for its celebration of the people rehabilitating baby elephants and orangutans orphaned by poaching and habitat encroachment.

TV documentary "Gordon Ramsay: Shark Bait" for its fearless exposé of shark-finning, and "Animal Planet Investigates: Captive Hunting Exposed" for pulling back the curtain on the so-called sport of "hunting" tame animals trapped in fenced pens.

ABC's "20/20" for exposing inhumane conditions at an egg factory farm.

The magazine Vanity Fair for an extensive look at the escalating ivory trade decimating African elephants.

McClatchy Newspapers for a series of articles spotlighting the inhumane treatment of chimpanzees in scientific research, and The Atlantic.com for incisive reporting on the politics of wild horse management and round-ups.

The entire 26th Genesis Awards event will be broadcast as a one-hour special on Animal Planet on May 5 at 4 p.m.

A clip of the NBC News report featuring Equine Voices is posted at www.equinevoices.org

Contact Equine Voices founder Karen Pomroy at karen@equinevoices.org