

Friday, October 4, 2013

## Feature Friday-"Karen Pomroy – Equine Voices Rescue and Sanctuary"- "Noticing the Unnoticed"

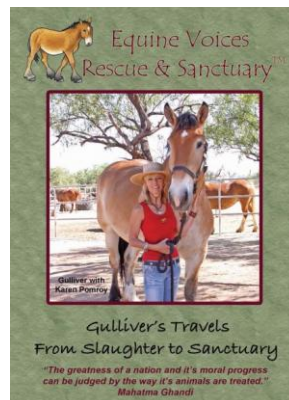
Howdy Folks,

*I hope you'll read, share and even print and hand out today's Feature Friday.*

*There is a very real horror out there for tens of thousands of pregnant mares standing tethered in stalls, unable to lie down, for up to 6 months, in "pee-lines," with catheters attached and deprived of sufficient water so as to produce rich urine used to make dangerous hormone replacement drugs for women. The cancer risks and other dangers of these drugs to the women who use them have been known since the '40s. The fate of the innocent tiny foals born is most often slaughter. They and their mothers are the "unnoticed" byproducts of a horrible industry ... Karen Pomroy and Sanctuary are doing all they can to help and rescue the unnoticed - and spread the word of the horrors and dangers of pregnant mare urine farms and the drugs produced. - My story "Noticing The Unnoticed" was published in my Heartbeats Column in [Trail Blazer](#) last June. This is the story of folks trying to help ... Thank you Karen and Equine Voices.*

### "Noticing the Unnoticed"

Gulliver is 9 years old and frolics with other happy horses at Equine Voices Rescue and Sanctuary in Southern AZ. But he, and they, are a few of the lucky ones. Born on a pregnant mare urine (PMU) farm he was a byproduct of the industry that produces hormone replacement products. Sweet Gulliver was destined for slaughter and had Karen Pomroy not discovered his and his 3 herd mates' plight, that destiny would have been fulfilled. As it is for thousands of unnoticed, unwanted foals born each year to thousands of mares forced to stand months and years on end in what has come to be known as, "Pee-Lines." Pregnant mares tethered standing in stalls, unable to lie down, for up to 6 months, with catheters continually attached to collect their urine, made rich by water deprivation. This was the birth place of sweet Gulliver. And is the birthplace of tens of thousands of sweet Gulliver's each year.



Gulliver and Karen

The year was 2004 and Karen was working at a wild horse rescue in CA when one day she learned more than she wanted to know about PMU farms. That very night she searched the internet for more information and discovered a PMU farm in North Dakota that had lost its contract to produce pregnant mare urine and the horses needed to go. Anywhere. Gulliver was not the most handsome horse, and his destiny was slaughter. Karen's heart immediately connected with young Gulliver and she made arrangements to rescue him. Even though they had not yet met in person, Gulliver touched her so profoundly she knew, from him, she'd found her purpose.

She'd already been on the search for a place to relocate her 2 rescue horses and now the additional 4 PMU foals. She found the perfect location tucked in the foothills of the Santa Rita Mountains in Southern AZ. She settled in, had Gulliver and his 3 herd mates trucked to their new home. Once they were all relocated she realized she could do more, and charted her mission. She would begin to do all she could to help save these foals and their mommas, who are forced to live a nightmare, while at the same time try to raise awareness of this practice. She would devote herself to finding ways to not only raise awareness, but also to educating about alternatives to the drugs produced with pregnant mare urine. The cancer risks and other dangers of these drugs to the women who use them have been known since the '40s. Karen wondered if the women prescribed these drugs knew not only of the potential dangers to themselves, but what the horses endured to produce those drugs.



Rescued PMU mares learning to socialize

Karen's inner being wrestled with the idea of such a huge but necessary commitment. She sat with Gulliver and discussed with him the reality of saving more of his friends. Karen had spent years in the corporate world and knew of risk taking, the disappointment of failures and the exhilaration of success. She set out for success. She incorporated Equine Voices in '04 and became a Non-profit 501 c-3 in Feb of '05, with a dedicated focus on PMU foals and mares. Since Gulliver found Karen, and raised his plea for help, Equine Voices has helped rescue over 400 mares, foals and other horses. Mostly PMU mares and foals but Equine Voices is there to help any horse in desperate need.



Rescued PMU babies checking out their new world

During the height of the PMU experiment there were reported to be 450 PMU farms in the US and Canada and each farm could have as many as 1,000 horses. So you can imagine how many darling foals were born each year just to be unnoticed, unwanted and discarded. Many are/were shipped overseas for slaughter for human consumption. These darling babies are born just to die, to produce a product that is potentially harmful to the millions of women who use it daily. There is suffering on both ends. The suffering of the women who may realize the very negative side effects of breast and ovarian cancer, blood clots, diabetes, and other harmful medical conditions. Courts have awarded millions to women who have been harmed.

And there is suffering on the beginning end in the PMU farms. Not only are those tens of thousands of sweet little foals born each year just to die, unnoticed. But their mommas, too. The poor suffering mares forced to stand in the "Pee-Lines" for years. Every mare Karen has rescued, or helped someone adopt, was in the same tortured condition. Feet that had lost their natural shape, legs that hardly worked, and a blank look in their eyes. The look of a once noble horse who had lost its soul. The empty eyed look of the standing dead. She wonders if the doctors who prescribe this type of hormone replacement drug ever looked into the eye of a sad and broken mare. Or touched an unnoticed foal who was born just to die ... She wonders if the women prescribed these drugs are made fully aware of the suffering that's part of producing them, or the potential harmful side effects of using them. Were they ever told of the natural and synthetic alternatives to pregnant mare urine therapy?

Karen and the 150 volunteers, at Equine Voices, who last year racked up over 16,000 volunteer hours saving and rehabilitating mares and foals, have as their mission to inform as many women as possible about not only the suffering, but the alternative treatments for hormone replacement products, natural and synthetic. Alternatives such as, Bio Identical hormone replacement therapy which is natural hormone replacement, and many natural herbal treatments used and found effective for hundreds of years. There are also new synthetic drugs made without pregnant mare urine. Karen suggests women ask their Doctors about alternative treatments. Equine Voices has many alternatives, and much more helpful information, listed on their website <http://www.equinevoices.org/horses/>.

At Equine Voices, Karen has designed wonderful programs where folks who have always wanted to know horses, but never had the chance, can meet horses and learn basic, and even not so basic, horsemanship skills from qualified staff and once discarded horses.

Their volunteer program is specifically designed to not only rehabilitate the unnoticed horses, but to teach horsemanship to anyone who would like to learn about life with horses. Volunteers also learn important life skills by helping to fund raise, handling the adoption process for rehabilitated horses, and pitching in to help the never-ending list of chores that are part of a busy horse sanctuary.

Another wonderful program is the Youth Corral. Each summer dozens of youths come and take part in activities designed to enlighten young people to the plight of the American horse, provide physical activity away from computers and television, and teach responsibility, teamwork, compassion and the innate connection between humans, horses and nature in a way that will change their lives forever.

Equine Voices also partners with The Youth Center of Southern AZ, allowing young people of all ages to spend time at the farm, learning by helping. They discover new skills and ambitions inside themselves by interacting with other volunteers and the horses. Friendships that will last a lifetime are formed and the thread that connects them is the love of life that cradles Equine Voices.

These and other programs at Equine Voices create fun and exciting adventures and learning opportunities for children and adults. And the teachers are those once unnoticed, unwanted horses who are happy and grateful for the chance to help.

Rescuing, feeding, and rehabilitating these wonderful horses is rewarding on so many levels, but expensive, too. Fund raising is an ongoing effort to meet operating costs. One of the opportunities for volunteers is learning how to fund raise and write grants.

There are fun ways you can contribute to Equine Voices efforts to help Gulliver spread the word about PMU farms, their suffering mares and foals ... Did you know Gulliver has a fan club? He does. You can join his fan club for just \$10 a month. You'll get newsletters, a cool sticker and be part of something wonderful helping to change lives, animal and human. To find Gulliver's fan club go to [www.equinevoices.org](http://www.equinevoices.org). While you're there check out all of Equine Voices terrific programs, success stories and links. Check out their horses and foals ready for adoption.

You can rest assured your support, contributions and gifts will be going to a well run and respected organization. In March 2010 Equine Voices became the first equine rescue and sanctuary in AZ to be recognized and certified by the "Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries" (GFAS), the nation's premier organization providing standards for identifying legitimate animal sanctuaries. "Equine Voices is exemplary in so many areas, it is hard to choose just one to highlight," said Patty Finch executive director of GFAS. "But clearly laudable is their work to help pregnant mares and their cast-off foals, cruelly exploited for urine collection, used in the production of estrogen-replacement drugs. And their efforts to educate the public and medical community about the cruelty inherent in procuring them."



Karen and Gulliver Enjoying the day

Gulliver, we thank you and Karen for helping so many to notice the unnoticed.

Gitty Up  
Dutch Henry