



Georgia Equine Rescue League, Ltd.

With Your Help ...
We Will Make A Difference

Volume #172

www.gerltd.org

December 2009 / January 2010

Paulk - She's A Survivor!

A fairly typical complaint: Sheriff's department received a call on two thin horses and one that just died so they contacted us! I call it typical because a lot of times we don't hear about the horses until one dies, is down, or is already severely emaciated. Too often the plaintiff states that he's been watching the horses decline for weeks, months or even years ... please call us before it's too late!

I don't know if this is what happened in Paulk's case. Paulk is a 14 year old bay Arabian mare. I met her and her buddy, a three year old palomino Appaloosa stud, on a beautiful Monday morning in October. A code enforcement officer accompanied me to the complaint. It was at the dead end of a dirt road in the middle of nowhere. When we arrived at the location I realized that I had been here before almost two years ago. A fellow inspector had worked a complaint here in 2007. The original complaint was a thin, tethered horse without feed or water. After the inspector asked the owner to improve the situation the horse was moved to an unknown location. I re-checked the location a few months later but there was no sign of any horses so I closed the case.

Back to October 2009: Two horses are standing in a sandy paddock. Some junk, a collapsed shed, and sand – that's all there is, no signs of any hay or feed. I can not yet see the horses very well but as I get out of my car I am greeted by an emaciated dog. While the officer attempts to contact the owner I enter the paddock. Both horses immediately come to greet me. I inspect both of them and determine that they are in critical condition. The Arabian mare weight tapes in at 606 pounds, while the stud is barely 529 pounds. I'm looking for the dead horse and walk the paddock, both of them tag along. I don't find a dead horse. I decide to call my supervisor Robin and inform her of the situation. Because of the critical condition of the horses she asks me to try to get the horses released to us. (continued on the following page)



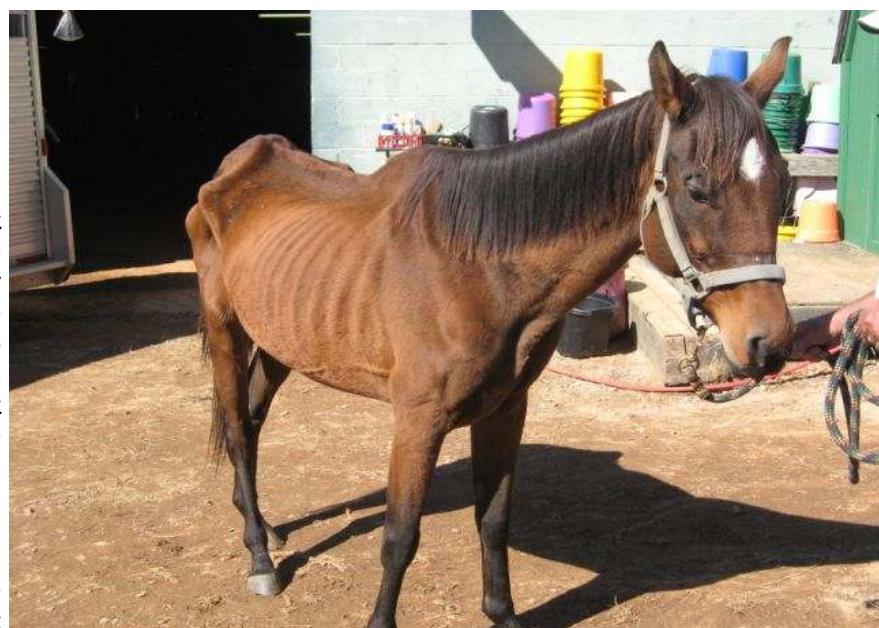
Paulk - She's A Survivor!
(continued from the front page)

Meanwhile, the officer has contacted the owner and she's on her way to meet us. She tells us that she just fed the last grain this morning and admits that she hasn't had hay in at least a week and a half. She remembers that the GDA has been at her place before and states that the bay mare is the same horse we saw two years ago and that she has only had the Appaloosa for about 3 - 4 months. She claims that she doesn't know what the third horse died of but admits that it was thin as well. This is obviously a bad situation for all animals involved.

I try hard to convince her to release the horses and the officer backs me up but she keeps telling us that she has been feeding her horses - and dogs - that she loves them and that she cannot part with the bay mare because she has had her for about ten years. I remind her that the mare was thin two years ago and that she has more than one thin animal and might have to face charges for Cruelty to Animals. She refuses to make a decision so I leave her a violation notice and require her to get hay and feed by tomorrow morning. The officer tells her that she cannot move the horses without my permission and as a side note I remind her to also feed her dogs.

Early the next morning she calls me to let me know that she would release the stud but wants to keep the mare. I tell her that everything has to be picture perfect by the time I get there in order to be able to keep the mare. Unfortunately all trailers close enough to pick him up are already in use so he will have to wait until Wednesday morning. When I get to her place she has good quality hay as well as feed with a higher fat content. The one skinny dog is now joined by another one almost as skinny as the first one. I left my car door open and they fight over an apple core I left on the floor. I brought some dog food and ask the owner for permission to feed them. The dogs about take my fingers off and I regret that I didn't bring enough for both. The owner casually tells me that the second dog just had puppies and that they all died. I tell her that we would be back with the trailer in the morning to pick up the stud.

3 p.m. the same day: I get a phone call letting me know that the stud is down and can't get up. My supervisor informs me that the trailer is still in use but should be back any moment and that they would head out immediately. She also updates the state veterinarian and he makes the decision to not leave the bay mare behind but to impound her if necessary. What a relief! I informed the owner that we were on the way to pick up the Appaloosa stud and once more attempted to get a release on the bay mare after I told her the state vet intended to impound her as well. The owner states she will relinquish both horses if she must. I inform the magistrate judge about the situation and get an inspection warrant just in case I need it since most owners become uncooperative when the trailer rolls in. (continued on page 15)



Who's Who Georgia Equine Rescue League, Ltd.

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Jennifer Baker, DVM

Michael Chisolm, Esquire

To report a case of equine abuse, call the Georgia Department of Agriculture's Equine Division Monday - Friday / 8:30 am - 4:30 pm (404) 656-3713 or (800) 282-5852

If you would like GERL to assist with an Equine Abuse case call (770) 464-0138

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***Please submit all newsletter materials by the 10th of each month for submission in the following month's newsletter.**

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***If you are interested in becoming an Area Coordinator
for a county not listed here, please contact
Ronnie Pesserilo (770) 466-4515 or
gerlrone@bellsouth.net.**

LET ME SAY THIS ... ABOUT THAT

By Patty Livingston, President"

I can hardly believe that my first year as President of GERL is almost behind me. The time literally flew by. I've learned a lot about the horse rescue business since last January. Many of us have. I recently reflected on the goals that we had set for GERL for 2009 and wondered how close we came to hitting them. So, I dusted off the presentation that I had shared with everybody at the annual meeting back in February. Here's where we stand.



- Fund new Pulaski Prison Impound facility
- Continue to support/fund all GDA impounds
- Partner with GDA to help with their auctions and fund-raising events
- Provide funding to Dawson County Animal Control for new impound facility
- Revamp GERL website
- Revitalize GERL newsletter
- Return Poker Ride to Dawson Forest
- Create new Spring Ride
- Increase membership to include 500 members
- Education:
 - Attend horse fairs, meetings and other clubs' events to educate public & bring awareness
 - Involve youth in the education process
 - Support potential neutering clinics hosted by GDA
 - Host educational clinics for Animal Control facilities and Sheriff's Depts.
 - Create educational handouts/brochures
- Build network of foster homes
- Consider repair of roof @ Mansfield Impound
- Help families with lost jobs and health issues
- Increase event profitability
- Increase number of volunteers
- Return of GERL Christmas Party!!

We donated \$6,000.00 to the Pulaski Prison Impound facility. They built a couple of turn-out sheds with some of the money and still have a balance for future needs. We have attended every GDA (Georgia Department of Agriculture) horse auction that they've held this year. We were also there with their other fund-raisers, such as the polo match and a couple of obstacle course benefits. In turn, the GDA has also attended all of our events. We have a wonderful working relationship with all of the inspectors as well as the directors.

The GERL Website has been revamped, thanks to Steven Neal, our webmaster, and I think it looks wonderful. Likewise, Betty Evenson has made our newsletter one of the best reads around. We're constantly getting compliments about how much people look forward to receiving the next edition. I want to thank them both for the sacrifices they've made this year to help GERL.

The Poker Ride did return to Dawson Forest and we had a great turnout despite the rainy weather and we had a great time in "tent city" while raising over \$1,200.00. We had a new Spring ride: The Gene Ensminger Memorial Ride, which was held at Round Oak, near Monticello. It was a very successful weekend where we raised over \$13,000. We also raised about that same amount for Freight Fest at Jake Mountain. We have increased our event profitability, despite the current economy.

Dr. Kelly Lockerman, our Education Coordinator, revamped our GERL presentation and gave several presentations to youngsters at various functions. Annette Raybon brought four young officers of the Paulding County High School 4H Horse & Pony Club to a meeting that we set up between the GDA and GERL to discuss policies and procedures. We will continue to make this a high priority going forward. We attended numerous numbers of events this year, setting up the GERL booth, selling T-shirts and passing out educational literature and newsletters.

LET ME SAY THIS ... ABOUT THAT

(continued from the previous page)

We paid for scholarships for three county Animal Control officers to attend the Large Animal Rescue Training sponsored by the GDA. We also sent three GERL Area Coordinators to that training. We approved \$3,000 to build a temporary equine holding facility in Dawson County back in February. Unfortunately, Dawson County has never graded out the land for this temporary pen and carport. We are currently looking into making this same offer to the White County Animal Control facility. We also pledged \$2,000 towards any future castration program.

We have increased our list of foster homes thanks to our Foster/Adoption Coordinator, Donna Pieper. Donna has worked extra hard this year setting up and networking to place horses. We took over 20 horses into the GERL adoption program since the first of the year and have helped several individuals feed or care for their horses when health and financial situations existed. We also created a new program called "Feed A Horse" and have collected over \$3,000 in donations that is helping to feed several starved horses.

Not only did we repair some of the roofing at Mansfield, we spent an entire weekend there painting, building fence, repairing the culvert and numerous other things. In addition, we had the John Deere tractor and Gator located at the Mansfield Impound repaired.

At the time of this writing, we have not increased membership to the 500 mark. However, we are so close. This is still something that we're very proud of and want to thank everybody who joined this year, as well as all of you who renewed. You are all precious assets to GERL and we need you! And, lastly, the GERL Christmas party DID return! And, what better place for a Christmas party than Bethlehem?

Overall, I think we had an extremely successful year of events that we can all be proud of. I want to thank all of the Board members, Executive Committee Leads and all of our volunteers who helped make this possible. And, let me say this about that ... it has been my pleasure to serve as your President and I look forward to another successful year in 2010.

A Note from the Secretary's Desk

By Anne Ensminger

Well, another Fest has come and gone. This newsletter will contain comments and details about the weekend as well as many fun pictures of those who participated. To hold the event at Jake Mountain was a real "step out in faith" but in spite of terrible luck with the weather, it was heart warming to see how everyone came together to make the best of our "mud fest". We renewed old acquaintances, formed new ones, snagged some auction bargains, enjoyed great food, and made some money for the horses. Since these are the goals of every GERL event, I guess we are able to count Fright Fest 2009, as a huge success.

While I enjoyed the weekend immensely and am very grateful for the hard work of many, the outstanding thought in my head as I write this, has to do with GERL President, Patty Livingston. Of course, we all worked hard but Patty is responsible for bringing together a group of people with extraordinary resources, talent, and energy who were willing to go many extra miles to help us make the weekend an affair to remember. That willingness comes mainly because of the love and respect that these people have for Patty.

It was Patty who persuaded the Board of Directors that it would even be possible for us to hold a weekend event at Jake Mountain. She then contacted the Forest Service to make arrangements and get permission for us to have exclusive use of the camp for the weekend. We knew that the riding at Jake Mountain was wonderful but thought it impossible to get everyone parked for camping in such a facility. How wrong we were!

There are three people in this organization who know first hand that once you become the President of GERL you are the President for as long as you are willing to give most of your waking hours to the job. They are Betty Evenson who served for eleven years, Brian Dees who was President for the next five years, and then Patty, who, like Brian, agreed to step up when it looked as though there would be no continuing leadership for GERL.

Between sending and answering multiple phone calls and emails each day, going to numerous meetings in the evenings, writing for the GERL Newsletter, transporting equipment, feed, and horses at all hours of the day and night, Patty's time is pretty much spoken for. After all of this, she holds down a very responsible, full time job with Hewlett Packard, fosters GERL horses, and is the chief moral booster for all involved with horse rescue in Georgia.

(continued on the following page)

A Note from the Secretary's Desk (continued from the previous page)

You may have noticed that our volunteers and other lead members have recently been receiving recognition in the newsletter. This is due to Patty's realization that this organization is only as good as our members who are willing to help. As the years pass, there is much more to be done to keep our activities fresh and attracting participants. These small tributes are being presented in no particular order and there will be many more.

Your GERL Board is very proud of the wonderful relationship Patty has nurtured with Georgia Department of Agriculture's Equine Division. After all, they are our most prominent allies on behalf of horses in need. She has also fostered relationships with Law Enforcement and Animal Control Departments in several counties and is seeking ways for GERL to reach out to other counties to offer our help. I cannot imagine that there are many hours built into her days for sleep.

On a personal side, Patty's long time favorite pastime is to camp and trail ride with friends. While it is difficult since she became GERL President, she manages to get in some saddle time now and then. She is the most self-reliant woman I know and I want to be just like her when I grow up (Note: I am fifteen years older than Patty). I have seen this beautiful woman single handedly build a board fence across her property. "It's easy", she says. She sets a goal for herself to dig one posthole per day (with a manual post-hole digger!) and before you know it, the fence is completed. She is not bad with a chain saw either!

Patty is not married and many cannot imagine why. She is energetic, beautiful and intelligent, owns a farm with horses, a sports car, a truck, and two horse trailers. I guess all she needs is a bass boat to be the most sought after woman in America. Yet, she lives alone with her two faithful dogs, Jackie O. and Bud. One of Patty's horses is nearly thirty years old. A "pet peeve" of hers is people who "throw away" old horses when they can no longer serve their owners. Patty's aged mare, Lacy, will never experience anything like that. There is little that Patty or GERL can do about this sad occurrence other than try to place as many of them as possible into loving homes for their last years.

Patty has another "pet peeve" and that has to do with people who indiscriminately breed horses just to have the experience of seeing a foal born. Many of these people have no idea concerning the responsibility of horse ownership or the importance of early training. Most have given little thought to the future of these innocent babies. These young horses often become the property of GERL or GDA.

Patty has adopted as a personal goal, and has enlisted the help of GDA and GERL, to see that every male horse that comes into our respective programs is gelded before it goes to an adoptive home. The GERL Board of Directors and most of our membership stand behind Patty one hundred percent on this.

GERL President, Patty Livingston, you have done much more than just make it possible for GERL to continue to help starved, neglected, and unwanted horses. You have presented a leadership style that is easy for all to embrace. You lead by example. I, for one am very proud to stand beside you.



Patty Livingston - Gator Fan

**If Your Name Is Listed Here, Your Membership Is Due For Renewal!
This Will Be Your Last Newsletter Unless You Renew.**

Due in December, 2009

Patti Cornelius
Shelley Drummond
Larry Howell
Christine & Barry Sheehy
Lenore Threlkeld
Karen Vaillancourt

Alpharetta, GA
Griffin, GA
Villa Rica, GA
Rincon, GA
Pine Mountain, GA
Chatsworth, GA

Due in January, 2010

Amelia & Wayne Bolton
Judy Bradberry
Carolyn Grigg
Penny Kvirant
Marge Mabey & Family
Debbie & Lamar Mullinax
Donna Pieper & Keith Fleming
Marie Simrod
Jean & Carl Strickland
Mike & Sandra Whisenant
Pat Widener

Barnesville, GA
Auburn, GA
Woodstock, GA
Whitesburg, GA
Alpharetta, GA
Covington, GA
Loganville, GA
Marietta, GA
Villa Rica, GA
Mansfield, GA
Monroe, GA

Please continue to support GERL ...

Junior Membership \$15 (12 and under)

Single Membership \$25 . Family Membership \$35

Business, Club, etc. \$50

***Membership form is on the last page of this newsletter**

**Please mail your check to:
GERL . PO Box 328 . Bethlehem, GA 30620**



**Please Help!
GERL receives money for the following ...**

**Please save Proof Of Purchase seals from bags
of these Southern States feeds –
Legends, Triple Crown & Reliance
and send them to:**

**Ginny Scarritt
4835 Kendall Court . Atlanta, GA 30342**

ALL money raised goes directly to GERL!

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HUGE SAVINGS!!!

THE BARN DOOR, INC.

A Horse Lover's Catalog
www.thebarndoors.com



Invites you to our
Christmas Warehouse Sample
& Inventory Clearance Sale!

Friday, December 4th - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 5th - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 6th - 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.



DO YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING WITH US!

***Bring this flyer with you and receive
10% off of regular priced, in-stock items
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The Barn Door is your source for unique gift items for horse lovers of all ages including home décor, jewelry, bedding, handbags, clothing, art and much more!

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LOCATED IN WAREHOUSE BEHIND FAJITA GRILL
388 Hwy 53 E - Bldg #100 . Dawsonville, GA 30534
(706) 265-4281 - Call for directions or for additional details.



GERL ADOPTABLES

Stormy is a 7 year old Welsh/TB cross gelding, 14 hands, with good ground manners. With continued training, he will be a wonderful horse for a smaller adult or an experienced youth rider. Currently he has about 30 days of professional training and has been perfect on two recent trail rides. We are looking for a responsible home that will continue his training using the calm techniques that he has been started with. He is a lovely mover with a ground covering trot and canter. If you are interested in adopting a beautiful horse, full of potential, and willing to continue his training, Stormy is your horse.



STORMY



AFLRE EXTINGUISHER

Fire Extinguisher is a 6 year old registered Arabian and stands 16 hands. He was injured during his training as a 4 years old. This has caused a slight limp, but he appears to trot and canter in the pasture without pain. Because of the injury, he will be adopted as a companion only horse - he is great with other horses, including older horses. He is very sweet and was one of the favorites at the State Impound Barn. His Sire was the Reserve National Park Champion and his Grand Dam was also a Champion.

Paulie Girl



Paulie Girl is a flashy 5 year old paint pony mare (mother of Tidbit). As you can see from her picture, she is gorgeous and stands at 13.2 hands. She is well socialized and gentle to handle,. We will be working with her to determine her level of saddle training.

For adoption fees and additional information please contact

Donna Pieper, GERL Adoption & Foster Coordinator
(404) 797-3333 / gerldonna@bellsouth.net

GERL ADOPTABLES



Butterscotch

Butterscotch is a 13.3 hand, 3 year old sorrel mare. She is gentle to handle and enjoying her pasture mates as she gains weight during her rehabilitation. Butterscotch is looking for her forever home where she can begin her next level of training.

Tidbit is a beautiful paint yearling pony filly ready to find a new forever home. She is very friendly and gentle to handle. Her current foster home continues to show her human love, while she learns her horse etiquette from her pasture mates. She has started her training on a lunge line.



Tidbit



Dallas

Charmer is a 7 year old Tennessee Walking Horse Gelding. Charmer has been ridden on trails, but during the past year, he did not have much riding or handling due to the health of his owner. He currently resides at the home of trainer Tanya Kiselyova who is continuing his training to make sure he is safe and pleasant on the ground and under saddle. For additional information and pictures, visit www.equinoxhorse.net/Charmerproject.html.

For adoption fees and additional information please contact

**Donna Pieper, GERL Adoption & Foster Coordinator
(404) 797-3333 / gerldonna@bellsouth.net**

GERL ADOPTABLES

Tyree and Lobo were both stated as 15yo bay geldings when we brought them into the GERL adoption program. Based on our vet's assessment, he feels they are closer to 10-12yo. They stand at approx 14.2-14.3hh and stocky (easy keepers). These boys are both VERY sweet and gentle to handle, but have no previous riding experience to our knowledge. There are no physical issues with either gelding that would prevent these boys from being trained under saddle. We will be looking for either companion homes or homes that have the facilities and time to train them properly. These geldings will be adopted out individually.



Tyree

Ekyra – 9 year old bay arabian mare, approx 14.2hh and **Rosie** – 4yo sorrel arabian mare, approx 14.1hh (Ekyra's baby) – These two mares will be adopted out as companion horses only due to a confirmation issue. Although it is not mandatory that they stay together, it would be ideal. These two have never been separated and due to an eye injury, Ekyra is blind in her right eye and seems more secure with Rosie around. At the time that GERL received these two into our program, they had been handled very little. After a short 4-6 weeks with 'clicker' training by Tanya Kiselyova, they run to the fence and are easily approached and haltered. They are very well socialized with both other mares and geldings. Ekyra and Rosie are both sweet girls, love to be brushed and handled, and looking for the special forever home.



Lobo



Rosie



Ekyra

For adoption fees and additional information
please contact Donna Pieper, GERL Adoption &
Foster Coordinator (404) 797-3333
gerldonna@bellsouth.net

The Christmas Corner



Youth Sweatshirt Navy M-XL \$15.00
Long Sleeve T Navy M-XL \$14.00
(not pictured)



Adult Long Sleeve Shirts
Black, Chocolate and Cobblestone
S-XL \$15.00 XXL \$18.00



Adult Sweatshirt
Deep Forest and Navy
S-XL \$17.00
XXL \$20.00



Ladies Long Sleeve Shirts
Pink, Chocolate and Navy
S-XL \$16.00 XXL \$18.00



Ladies Polo Shirts
S-XL \$20.00 XXL \$24.00
White, Light Blue,
Yellow Haze, Heather Grey

Fright Fest 2009
Adult Long Sleeve T
S-XL \$10.00 XXL-\$12.00
Adult Sweatshirt
S-XL \$12.00 XXL-\$14.00
Youth Long Sleeve T
M-XL \$9.00
Youth Sweatshirt
M-XL \$11.00



Black only



T-Shirts S-XXL All sizes \$10.00
Blue Spruce, Oatmeal and Cactus

Call Diana DeMoss 770-267-0867 To Order! We take Visa, Master Card and Discover!

"Oh Come All 'Ye To Bethlehem" GERL Christmas Party!

Saturday, December 12th

Time: 7:00 PM - 11:00 PM

Bring: Your favorite covered
dish, BYOB & lawn chair

Where: 61 McElhannon Road, SE
Bethlehem, GA 30620
(770) 867-0760 (home)



*There will be good food, good friends and even a
bonfire (weather permitting). Bring your lawn chairs.*

Directions from Gainesville: take Hwy 60 thru Gainesville to Hwy 124. Turn right onto Hwy 124 and go approx. 3 miles to light. Turn left onto Hwy 53S to Winder. Follow Hwy 11S by turning left at McDonald's in Winder. Go approx. $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles (bear right) at Blockbuster. Go approx. 5 miles to Hwy 316. Cross over 316 and go 1.5 miles through Bethlehem. Turn left on McElhannon Rd. Go through 4-way stop; First house on the right.

From Atlanta: From 85S exit onto Hwy 316 towards Athens. Go approx 23 miles to Hwy 11 and turn right. Go 1.5 miles and turn left onto McElhannon Rd. Go through 4-way stop; First house on right.

RSVP: (770) 867-0760

**Don't forget to bring your Christmas cards with you
to mail from the Bethlehem Post Office.**

GERL Calendar of Events

Christmas Party

Saturday, December 12th
*Details on page 13

Annual Meeting

Saturday, January 16th
Golden Corral - Winder, GA

Poker Ride

March, 2010

Date to Be announced
Dawson Forest - Dawsonville, GA

Gene Ensminger

2nd Annual

Memorial Ride 2010

April 30th - May 2nd
to be held at Ron & Adrian Cook's
Round Oak, GA

Mark your calendars so that you don't miss any of these wonderful events that will benefit GERL. It's a guaranteed great time ... a benefit for a wonderful cause and a way to see old friends and meet new friends!

Pretty Boy

Thank you, thank you, you do not know how much it means to me to hear about all these guys. I worry about them I feel a sigh of relief when I finally get the horses off to GERL but I still wonder if they are okay. This is the only way I can keep coming to work everyday and deal with all the bad, I focus on the good. Your update made my day.

He is such a sweet boy, is he not. I fell in love the first time I met him. Patty helped with two other horses. They were great but did not have the personality this boy has. He just wants to be your friend and to think he survived on his own for how long. I cannot imagine anyone walking away from him and leaving him all alone to fend for himself. I also wonder how long he was left alone, what he thought when he would follow the cars down the road and they drove away, was he hungry, scared, or just lonely, confused.

Thank you so much for the update. You really did make my day, week, etc. The girl that found him wanted to cut off his mane and tail because of the mats. I explained she could attempt to brush it out. I am so glad she could not keep him. He deserves so much more. Thank You. I thank God you and GERL are there to help. I do not even want to think about what I would do without you.

Patricia Cooper - White County Animal Control



Editor's Note:

Pretty Boy was found running at large in White County. The letter above is written by one of their Animal Control Officers who was involved with his case and in getting him to GERL. The Archers are currently fostering Pretty Boy. Look for his update in the next newsletter.



A Horse Lover's Catalog

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WELCOME NEW GERL MEMBERS

		Referred By:
Danny & Jody Brooks	Dawsonville, GA	Betty Evenson
Belinda & Hannah Carruth	Social Circle, GA	GERL
Charles & Linda DeVane	Quitman, GA	Cheryl McAuliff
Melanie Mitchell	Flowery Branch, GA	Ray Ziebell
Michelle Self & Family	Covington, GA	Leisa McCannon
Susan Webster-Chiarello	Covington, GA	GERL
Ron & Pat Hinson	Covington, GA	GERL
Eunice Hires	Windsor, SC	GERL
Samantha Bell	McDonough, GA	GERL

Thank You For Renewing Your GERL Membership

Sandra Bryant	Monroe, GA	David & Terri Elsberry	Temple, GA
Elaine Hargadon	Waleska, GA	Phillip & Lisa Henson	Pine Mtn, GA
Michael & Gina Lance	Dacula, GA	Tracy & Lance McClain	Cumming, GA
Mary Loudermilk	Canton, GA	Carole Wilson	Douglasville, GA

Paulk - She's A Survivor! (continued from page 2)

I want to be sure I don't have any problems getting both horses. We arrive with the trailer just as it is getting dark. The Appaloosa stud is still down and even with three inspectors helping him he can't get up and is now having seizures. We get him onto the slide board and pull him into the trailer. This is not looking good. Paulk patiently waits her turn to be loaded and jumps in right away hoping for a better life at the end of the trailer ride. As we get in the truck the owner wishes us a good evening. ???

At the impound barn, Dr. Mangham, Robin, Megan, and Adriane work on him until the early morning hours to give him every possible chance. Upon arrival, his body temperature had dropped to 89 degrees and the seizures continued. As he laid there, he would search for a warm, caring hand to put his head on. Numerous attempts were made to place him in the Anderson sling, but he was too weak to even make an effort to stand. Warm fluids were run intravenously, blankets were added, heat lamps were used, and finally his temperature rose to 98 degrees and the seizures subsided. Unfortunately we were too late for him ... despite all of our efforts he passed away about noon the next day with inspectors and Dr. Mangham at his side. The only comfort we have is that he died in the presence of people who cared. We named him "Swayze" after another who fought so hard to live.

And then there is Paulk, the sole survivor of three horses whose only fault was that they were owned by a person who didn't do the right thing. When Paulk arrived at the impound barn she was wobbly on her feet, but eagerly followed Robin into her stall where

hay and water awaited. She immediately began to munch, taking only brief moments to nicker encouragement to her friend who was fighting for his life. She looked on through her stall thankful we had gotten her in time. Sometime during the night we performed the "check-in" process on Paulk. She didn't care what we did, she just loved the attention she was getting. She had pressure sores over her body where her bones would rub wounds on her skin when she would lay down and rain rot all along her top line. She has marks on her face from a halter being too tight at one point in time, but her eyes are bright and her spirits high. She is as low on the body condition score system as you can get. We would label her a zero if we could. Dr. Mangham checked her out while he was there and said other than needing a lot of TLC and good feed, she was on her way to recovery. Like our Ms. Marty Paulk, the bay mare "Paulk" is a fighter. Stay tuned for updates on her recovery. Thank you to GERL for sponsoring this horse so that she can be restored to health and live out the rest of her life in a new loving home where she does not have to worry about whether or not she will get another meal. Also a special thank you to Dr. Will Mangham for coming to our call for help late at night and DONATING his services. He spent the night at the barn with us and did not give up trying to help Swayze. He committed to see Paulk through until she is rehabilitated.

This story is not over yet, it also includes two skinny dogs that were seized by the Sheriff's department and are now waiting to find a better home. Anyone have room? And let's not forget the owner who has been charged with animal cruelty for the condition of her animals. May justice be served!

By: Marei Hunter, Equine Inspector, GDA With a little added by Robin Easley, Field Supervisor, GDA

Our Thoughts & Prayers Are With You

Carla Rutledge
as you mourn the loss of your sister, and twin,
Carol Anderson

The family of Helen Burris of Jacksonville, FL
who passed away on November 4th.
Helen and her husband Bob are GERL members.

Susie Bond
as you mourn the loss of your husband
Bob Bond

Thank You For Your Donations And Continued Support

Mary Loudermilk
The Marilyn Cox Douglas Charitable Foundation
Judy Sophianopoulos
Dr. Jerry Frost
Carole Wilson
Charles & Linda DeVane

Get Well Soon

Sylvia Mooney

Thank You For Donating To Our Feed A Horse Program

Ed & Sara Merritt
Jasper, GA

Thank You

Mickie Anne Warren from Winchester, TN
for donating her time and fuel to travel to White County
to pick up an "at large" stallion and deliver him to
Patty's house on the eve of Fright Fest!

Thank You For Your Change Jars

The Stock Market - Conyers, GA
Pampered Pony - Monroe, GA

Donations In Memory Of

Marty Paulk
by Rita Hackley - Dawsonville, GA

Sugar
by Melanie Mitchell

Bodacious Bud
by Marshia Milam-Medford



Thank You To Our Foster Homes

Scott Sauerbier & Family
for fostering Dallas & Tidbit

Jean Long
for fostering Lucky

Susan McCullar
for fostering Butterscotch & Paulie Girl

Ronnie Pesserilo
for fostering Stormy

Bob & Shirley Guhl
for fostering Lobo and Tyree

Patty & Nick Howard
for fostering Ekyra & Rosie

Tiffany Bergdorf
for fostering Afire Extinguisher

Ken & Susan Archer
for fostering Pretty Boy

Patty Livingston
for fostering Apache, Cheyenne & Brutus

Diana DeMoss
for fostering Apache & Cheyenne

GERL Fright Fest 2009

By Anne Ensminger & Patty Livingston

Many GERL members and friends joined us for Fright Fest 2009 at Jake Mountain and I am pleased (and relieved) to say that, in spite of the weather, it was a HUGE success. Of course, we made money for the horses but the most thrilling thing to me was the spirit of cooperation demonstrated by everyone for the entire weekend. We knew ahead of time that we would be camping very close to one another and, sure enough, that was the case. We did not, however, know that it would be another "mud fest" as we have experienced in the past.

The Board members and a few hardy volunteers arrived on Thursday to set up. The huge tent was already set up by the time we arrived. It was spectacular and reminded me of The Big Top! It was a beautiful day and the evening proved to be bright with moonlight. It was perfect and we got so much done. We woke to grey skies and drizzle on Friday morning. Trailers and excited campers soon began to arrive, find their parking spots, and meet the neighbors with whom they would camp more closely than they imagined. Not a complaint.

The first thing on the agenda was our, always interesting, potluck supper. We have some great cooks in this organization and they really showed what they could do that evening. Not one person went to bed hungry, I am certain. Several participants brought their entrees for the 1st Annual Craft contest that were displayed on a separate table along with pens and paper for everybody to vote.

Immediately following potluck was our cake walk. We had many yummy homemade cakes to give away and for only \$1 per walk we had many folks participating, including all of the kids, who really got into the spirit. It was a lot of fun for both the participants AND the spectators. We made over \$140 which ain't too shabby!

We awoke on Saturday morning with the realization that it had rained hard all night. Mud was everywhere but I noted a smile on every face entering our tent for breakfast. Amy Cox, Gail Mann and Carol Upshaw, along with their group of volunteers, prepared a breakfast that would rival any IHOP menu. There were scrambled eggs, bacon, ham, sausage, potatoes, cheese grits, the best oatmeal in the world, and French toast. We had fresh fruit, juice, milk, and coffee. Whew! Even if there were some who were thinking of saddling up, I am sure they had to wait until that big, delicious breakfast, settled.

During breakfast we announced the winner of the favorite craft contest. Sandy Stevenson won it with a wonderful and whimsical cowboy made of clay. He was quite tall and wore a big hat, sported a long mustache, and was complete with chaps, boots, and a lasso. There were many other wonderful crafts entered in the contest and all were ultimately donated to our auction, held later that evening. We presented Sandy with a huge basket full of horsey items. Sandy, you had some outstanding competition but we congratulate you on this win and thank everyone for his or her craft donations.

We did see a few hardy souls ride their horses out of camp when we had a break in the rain. We had plenty of help setting up our auctions (silent and live) since many came without their horses. The caliber of items that we had at our auctions is unbelievable. There was a mink coat, several Coach purses, a huge wooden Indian, two wooden totem poles and too many other items to name, but I want to thank all of the individuals and businesses who donated items to the auction. This is our main money maker at our Fests and we really appreciate all of our loyal supporters.

The rest of the day was spent watching the Georgia/Florida game on a satellite TV set up in the tent by some die-hard fans, playing cards, or just visiting with old and new friends. It was heart warming to see our youth (from age six through early teens, both boys and girls) band together for games, exploring the area, getting REALLY muddy, and enjoying riding in small off road vehicles, of which there were several available.

Finally it was time for the costume contest. Everybody gathered at the tent for pictures and to solicit for votes. We had decided to charge \$1 per vote to help raise more money for the horses. It was hard to guess the identity of many but others were very familiar, if a bit FAR OUT. We are including pictures of many of the costumes so everyone who could not attend will see what I mean. In a very close vote, Reponda Bailey, very glamorously dressed as Rapunzel, won the contest. Ray Ziebell and Maddie Upshaw, who both arrived in their costumes on horseback, certainly deserved honorable mention for originality. There were at least ten others who also had really great costumes.

(continued on the following page)

GERL Fright Fest 2009

(continued from the previous page)

Judging of the best decorated campsite followed. What fun! The judges quietly rode through camp and selected the campsite of Tammy Croghan and Phil Connor as the winner of the Campsite Decorating Contest. I am happy that I was not assigned the task of making that decision, as there were several outstanding campsites. Congratulations to Tammy and Phil!

Mickey Farmer has been our auctioneer for 15 years. He is always hugely entertaining as he works his magic to squeeze just one more bid out of our audience for every item. His humor and wit are always as anticipated as the bargains we hope to purchase. He truly worked his spell on Saturday evening, but not before he was awarded the first Marty Paulk GERL Cheerleader award. He seemed surprised but I cannot imagine why. GERL has never had a more jovial and sincere cheerleader. We love you, Mickey!

There are so many people to thank. I know I will leave someone out but ask his or her forgiveness in advance. First, I must thank our kitchen crew. I will name Amy Cox, Gail Mann, and Carol Upshaw but I saw many others in the kitchen at different times during the weekend. Amy is amazing. She managed to get almost every bit of the food donated. Food is traditionally one of our large expenses at these events. Thanks to Alan Brown of Processors Co-op, Inc., who has always been generous in donating food to GERL over the years. Other food donations came from Ingles, Wal Mart and Kroger of Dawsonville. Amy, her husband, Scooter, and several muscular guys managed to get a real stove set up in the kitchen and lots of other equipment needed to prepare our meals. Meals were served hot, on time, and were scrumptious! Amazing!

Since there is no electric power or water at the Jake Mountain Campground Reponda Bailey managed to provide generator power for the entire weekend, compliments of her friend, Dale Clark. Dale also provided 100 gallons of propane to run the generator for the weekend. Two gas generators and a huge light tree were also donated by David Hatfield, owner of Metro Rentals in Gainesville. The huge light tree, like the ones you see on road construction sites, illuminated the entire tent area, and its generator provided power for several trailers. Stanley Cochran, of Cochran Brothers Electric, donated the use of a power box for all of the power cords. Reponda had to make a couple of trips to get all of this equipment up there, along with the help of Dale. We owe them all a huge thank you for their generosity and their time.

With one arm in a sling, Bob Thomas and friend, Hugh Stowers, provided two huge tanks of non-potable water to be used for drinking water for our horses. I am told that Bob had to modify both tanks so that we could more easily draw water from them. Thank you very much, Bob and Hugh.

Another great big THANK YOU goes to Jane Gilbertson, who donated her time and talents to take pictures of everybody during the event. Jane is a real pro and the pictures were absolutely awesome! After the event she posted the pictures on Snapfish and sent out a link so that we could go online and view or buy the pictures.

Always a necessity, Porta Potties (2) were donated by Bud Eavenson of J&J Disposal Services. This is also usually a large expense item for our events. Bud, how can we thank you enough? By the way, some secret fairies impressively decorated two of the Potties. We heard stories of some who had a hard time finding their way into the potty at a time when time was of the essence! I hope everything came out all right J.

I certainly cannot forget to mention the hard work of a young man named Jake who came with Amy and Scooter to the function. This kid is a real worker! He helped set up the kitchen, as well as the tables and chairs in the tent. When the rains started he dug a trench in the front of the tent to divert the water. Tucker Schull also jumped in to help with the trench and they both drove the SUVs through camp, picking people up and dropping them off. Thank you both for all of the hard work!

Having all of these things donated enabled us to clear more of the money we raised. And, speaking of which, we grossed approximately \$13,000.00 on the event. I think that is outstanding, especially, considering the rainy weekend and current economy. This will go toward helping a lot of horses and certainly the reason we all work so hard to put on a function of this magnitude.

We enjoyed another of Amy and Company's wonderful breakfasts on Sunday morning after Dr. Lee Myers brought the message for Cowboy Church. Judy McCrory also shared her gift of a beautiful singing voice as she sang an inspirational hymn. The sun finally shone in time for us to pack up and leave Jake Mountain. It had been a very wet weekend but we accomplished our mission. I hope everyone enjoyed the weekend as much as I did, and that all will continue to gather for GERL events in the future. We are helping many horses as these hard times continue. All of you are what makes this possible. Thank you.

***Look for photos of Fright Fest throughout the newsletter.**

In Memory of Marty Paulk – Every Equine’s Friend

I was honored when my supervisor Robin Easley called me to say the horse I had been working with was picked to be sponsored by GERL in memory of Marty Paulk. I have also lost a loved one to cancer so this is a special memory for me as well. I think this horse would have touched Marty's heart. So let me tell you about the horse named Marty.

Marty had been a case given to me when I began working for the Department in 2008. This was an open case that had been worked with by the previous inspector. The first visit I had was in the fall and Marty appeared to be in fair body condition. He had hay and a creek on the property. The small pasture was overgrown with weeds and had been overgrazed so no grass remained. I had several visits where Marty still had hay and remained in fair condition. Then as my visits progressed Marty began to lose weight and either there was no hay or very old and moldy looking hay. Marty is one of those horses that we as inspectors always remember. I was always greeted with a nicker and he would follow me to the fence wanting every moment of attention he could get from me. Notes were left and phone calls made to the owner, but it made no difference in Marty's condition. He continued to lose weight. With times as they are and with no funding and donations dwindling, I was worried about Marty's fate.



My last visit with Marty was on a dreary rainy day and this day I will always remember. I whistled for Marty as I crawled between the barb wire fence. He always came running when he would hear me as he was eager for attention and looking for a treat. This day I whistled several times and no sign of Marty. I knew something was wrong. As I walked up to the small shed he was standing under there was no nicker of greetings as he always gave me. Instead his head was lowered and his spirit gone. I weighed Marty soaking wet who was now at a body score 1.75 - 2.00. As I left he followed me to the fence and as I drove off in my truck he followed me all the way around the fence line to the bottom road. He had never done this before so trying not to be teary eyed, which was impossible, I stopped and petted him and promised I would be back with a trailer. Hopeful we could bring one more horse into the impound barn that was quickly filling up. I called Robin.

My next two days were spent on the phone with the owner who turned over ownership. On the third day since my last visit we showed up to pick up Marty. I was worried because I had forgotten grain to coax him onto the trailer so I stopped by the feed store, which by the way is less than a mile from Marty's pasture, and bought some. It was a beautiful sunny day and when Adriane and I got there I whistled for Marty. This time he came trotting up eagerly. We walked him up the side of the road to the trailer and not needing any coaxing at all he stepped right up on the trailer. I felt such a sigh of relief as the trailer door shut. And I'm sure Marty did too. Marty will be one of those horses out of the hundreds we see that will always be special to me. He always made it hard to just walk away. Unfortunately there will be many more Marty's but hopefully we can continue to try and make a difference in their lives.

Paula Sewell
GDA Equine Inspector
(continued on the following page)

In Memory of Marty Paulk - Every Equine's Friend (continued from the previous page)

Marty's Arrival at The Mansfield Impound

As the horse trailer came rolling in the driveway at the Mansfield Impound barn, the ground shook with the hoof beats of the welcome committee coming down the fence row to gawk at the new arrival. As Marty stepped off of the trailer the neighing and dancing began.

For the duration we have been acquainted with him in the field, to our knowledge he has not seen or been around another horse. He didn't know what to do – he couldn't decide if he was scared of the other horses, if he wanted to go meet and greet, or if he just wanted to put his head to the ground to eat the grass in the yard. In her normal patient style, Adriane just held the end of the lead line and let him turn a few circles, prance around a little, and get settled down. We escorted him into the barn for the arrival check in process.



Marty is an 11 year old sorrel stallion and appears to be of a gaited breed. He weighed in at 739 pounds, is 14.2 hands high, and a body condition score of two. His hooves were long and chipped, his forelock and mane matted with burr and briars, and his tail had formed not just one, but two “baseball” bats. Paula made everyone promise not to cut his tail, she says she can work her magic and get all of the knots out leaving a long, flowing tail (stay tuned, we'll see). Marty settled into a stall for the night, munching on hay and looking out at the horses who quickly became his new friends.

Within the next few days, Dr. Lowder from UGA and his vet students came to the barn for a castration frenzy. Marty was one of the chosen. I don't think he minded because it meant that in a short time he would be turned out in the pasture to run and play with the other geldings. Marty has progressed quickly and it will not be long until he will be ready to sell and move on to a new forever home. I hope that “Marty” will be bought and loved by someone as gracious, kind hearted, and devoted to horses as Marty Paulk.

Robin Easley - GDA Field Supervisor

GERL Volunteers of the Month

December/January 2009

By Patty Livingston

Two people equally deserve our recognition this month. How could our Volunteers of the Month for this issue be anyone other than Amy Cox and Reponda Bailey? We have many wonderful members who have been faithful volunteers for a long time. We look forward to honoring each one in the future but for the month just after Fright Fest 2009, we are overwhelmed with gratitude for the work these two did to insure the success of our main fundraiser of the year.

As plans for Fright Fest started to fall into place, the heads of the GERL Board of Directors were practically spinning as we learned of more and more that Amy and Reponda wanted, and would be able to do to help us. They were frequently in touch to say that they had managed to obtain donations of food, services, and equipment, which would save GERL money and provide much needed light and generator power for the weekend. They recruited volunteers to help in the kitchen and to deliver needed equipment. Amy managed to import a complete kitchen, which included a full size propane stove. Reponda arrived Friday afternoon with a HUGE light tree and the generator to power enough light to illuminate the entire tent area!



Amy Cox



Reponda Bailey

We had the luxury of adequate light in a very dark forest AND the best camp food anywhere, not to mention the necessary Porta Potties, which were also donated.

On top of all of this, Amy and "company" decorated those Porta Potties with spider webs and little orange lights which made them terribly inviting! Amy also entered several of her well known and sought after, craft items in our Craft Contest and then donated them for our auction. It was her idea that we hold a cakewalk, which proved to be so much fun and made \$145. Reponda appeared on Saturday afternoon dressed as a very beautiful Rapunzel and was the winner of our Costume Contest. We can certainly say that they both participated to the fullest!

These ladies are new to being active in our organization but they certainly managed to start with a BANG! Fright Fest would not have been nearly as enjoyable without their contributions and we would not have realized the sizable profit the weekend produced.

Thanks so much to Amy and Reponda and all those drafted into service by this fun loving pair!

FREIGHT FEST 2009



Labor Day Weekend, 2009

By Sandy Stephenson, GERL Member

By now, this is a picture that a lot more people are familiar with thanks to the wonderful Internet. It's a picture that helped put my life back together and helped me find Fancy.

On Friday, September 4th, I was headed out on the trail with some friends on my trusty horse. No helmet, (like an idiot) and ready to enjoy a few days off of work, camping in the National Forest and riding Jake Mountain. We decided to head for the big waterfall over by Camp Merrill. We hadn't been there in a long time and the trails we were used to using had a lot of down fall, but after stopping for lunch and cinching up again, we found a great trail and took off in anticipation of seeing the falls.



We had only gone a short distance when my horse got caught in a vine. No big deal, Fancy handles everything with ease ... but one of our group got excited and started yelling and my dog, Bodhi who is usually wonderful on the trails, started barking and biting at Fancy's heels. I don't know what happened next, but Fancy lost her footing and we went tumbling down the side of the mountain, end over end. I was really stunned and Bodhi chased Fancy. Everyone was concerned about me but Fancy was so scared, she took off. Blood was running down my back from what turned out to be a small gash to my head (concussion) and Juls was trying to stop the blood. Lynn started trying to figure out how they were going to ride double and get me out of the forest. I was well enough off to tell her that I wasn't going anywhere. Lynn took off for the Ranger camp to get help and Juls gave me a Tylenol as I told her that my jaw felt broken. In a short time, a wonderful young man showed up and started taking charge.

The rest of his men came and they loaded me onto one of those awful stiff back boards, put a collar on me and carried me out to the road, loaded me into some kind of ambulance, I guess. Then they loaded me into another one and soon I was in the Dahlonega Hospital. They put those awful intravenous things in my arms and took an MRI. Mean time I am telling them, cool it ... I don't have any insurance! Good grief, I am 64 and make my living off real estate. Since there is no real estate market, I ain't too loaded these days and I'm too young for Medicare and too old for regular insurance companies. Lynn got me to the hospital and called my Bobby. He was there quick like and we had to wait for the oral surgeon. They were talking about bolts and screws and wires and what they were going to do with my broken jaw! I've got a few bucks put away, but this doesn't sound too good.

Dr. Fox drove from Dawsonville, looked at the MRI and decided we didn't need the operating room! At this point, you are ready to go in your drawers from the relief. He decided we should wait until a few days pass and watch the healing process. He wasn't promising me that he wasn't going to wire it, but we would watch it. He kept telling me that I was old and injuries don't heal quickly at my age. Geez. Then he asked me to think about taking up knitting. Whew! He also gave me some super-duper drugs for pain ... of course.

When we got home, we realized that the only key to my truck and trailer, still parked in my Jake Mountain campsite, was in my saddlebags which was of course, on Fancy. She was running out there somewhere, lost in thousands of acres of National Forest, completely tacked up. Even drugged, I began to stress. What if the reins got caught on a tree? Or the stirrups hung up on a limb and she's stuck and defenseless to run from the coyotes. What if the wrong kind found her and took her and sold her? My saddle was pretty decent, they would steal it. She still has the bit in her mouth and the reins could get caught and really hurt her mouth ... thank God I had used my good leather reins that day. They would break where nylon wouldn't. Would she fall off a cliff? Would she leave the trails? They weren't any horse farms close that she might go to because of the other horses. Your mind goes bonkers with the bad stuff. If we had been on Jake or Bull Mountains, she would have known her way back to camp, but we were in strange territory.

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Labor Day Weekend, 2009

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I remember that my last thought that night was that Lynn and Villy and Juls, would find her, it would be okay.

Well, Let me tell you ... the day after is the bad day. When I woke up Saturday morning, everything hurt! I was black and blue and purple and orange everywhere! My face was all swollen (at least it was filling in the wrinkles) and my mouth ... my teeth were going wump, wump. I yawned and the pain made me cry. Now this old gal is pretty tough, but I was down for the call.

Bobby had already printed 100 flyers : LOST HORSE and was all over the Mountains posting them. I was alone so I bawled until I spied the pain pills. In a short while I was out again knowing that my friends would be bringing the truck and trailer home with Fancy in it. I got up and got a bottle of water later on, Bobby was still gone. The pain seemed to match my heart beat. I was filthy, blood was caked in my hair, twigs and dirt in the bed with me ... more pills, more sleep.

That night Bobby came home without the truck and trailer. He had to get a key made. No Fancy ... terrible pain. I think someone had called Karen. She got on the Internet and by Sunday morning more were out looking. I gotta get in the tub.

On Sunday Mark Hermann and Homer Pittman joined the search. Then Eric and Steve came to help. Betty and Duane tried to help. Kelly and Robin were on the mountain. Saturday, they had gone back to the scene and got into the danged bees. Kelly saw Fancy, but when she got close, Fancy took off again. She must be in a state of terror. Where did she go? At least we knew she was close to where it had all happened. She hadn't yet gone far, but she could. If we didn't find her soon, she could make it to Timbucktoo. What if she got on a busy road? Or walked out in front of someone going too fast on those gravel roads? Please dear God, take care of her.

Debbe and Donna drove the roads all around that National Forest calling for her. Karen came to the house and helped me eat some soup and get cleaned up. Bobby and Mitch were back out there looking. Karen's visit really helped. Her hug and her smile made me feel better. Debbie and Donna came to the house with hugs and smiles and positive words.

It was a gorgeous day ... silly thoughts, like I should be riding. Sure Sandy. You're a mess. I remembered how gorgeous the moon was Thursday night and how

I had wanted to go for a moonlight ride - like the old days with Dee. Fancy has been out there for two nights now. Monday the phone started ringing. More help was coming. I had called my office and Kelly and Tom told me to lay low, not worry about the agents and take the week off and find my horse. I think they knew I would be useless until we found her. Who could ask for a better boss?

On Tuesday morning, Bobby took me to the oral surgeon. More X-rays and after very firm orders, I got to leave without being wired.

Once I got out of there we drove up to Jake Mountain. I see Debbie and Martha from the Back Country Horse gang searching. Martha brought her "please don't leave me horse" who kept calling for the other horses in the hope that Fancy would call back. Bobby and I drove the roads and walked down trails. No luck. I had my blanket and pillow in the truck. My black and blue neck was getting really bad by dark and still no Fancy. Now she's gonna be out there for her 5th night. Even the pain pills wouldn't put me to sleep. ... at 5:30 a.m. I finally got to sleep.

Wednesday morning I wasn't hurting so bad. Bobby had to go do some work. I was able to unhook the truck and trailer and take off by myself to search.

The phone calls and e-mails were constant. Pete called from Tennessee with reassuring words and prayers. I am sure Bambi was wondering if my jaw was keeping me from talking. Nope, it will take more than a broken jaw to stop the one thing I am really good at!

Mark and Susan from True West in Tennessee sent me e-mails. CTHA called and talked to Bobby. The National Posse Search organization called. My Dream Weaver buddies from the drill team days were calling. Terry brought me three buckets of soup. Karen brought frozen yogurt and grape juice. Yvonne offered to bring a bottle of Crown Royal with a straw.

Rick, from our favorite lender's office, called to tell me he would have his ROTC search and rescue group there on Saturday. The Rangers were practicing searching for Fancy just like they would a human! Marianne, from the Cherokee Saddle Club, called. I didn't get all their names, but I appreciated them. Betty called several times telling me they would find her and that she and Duane would be back up on Saturday to search. Sandy and Cheryl from Midway called to tell me that they were going to get up a bunch to go to all the sale barns to make sure no one was trying to sell her this next Saturday.

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Labor Day Weekend, 2009

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Cindy called, just out of the hospital herself, to offer to help. My natural trimmer, Deni called with that wonderful calm, it will be okay attitude. Eric talked about how strong and smart Fancy is and that she was probably enjoying a vacation. But I knew that by now, she was ready to be home, confused and terrified ... probably hungry and lonely. We were headed into our 6th night and Fancy was still in the wilderness alone.

On Wednesday morning, I was feeling like I needed a call center to take all the well wisher's calls. Everyone was concerned and had ideas. Often I had no cell service. Karen and Joanie were searching from the Bull Mountain parking lot. Maybe she was over there. There is a trail not far from the accident that goes straight over to 77 at the base of Winding Stair. If she got that far, she would head for Bull Mountain, familiar territory. No Luck. I kept going back to the Jake Mountain parking lot, hoping she would be there. At about 10 in the morning, I was headed for the scene of the incident and was gonna walk the whole waterfall trail, look for poop, broken branches, tracks.

Take a bucket of feed and keep shaking it, think positive and take a lead. A biker called and said they found a lead rope at the trail head 28A. Could it be Fancy's? When we got there it was gone. Bobby and I both found ourselves feeling helpless as we drove the gravel roads, thinking she would be standing there around every bend. She wasn't.

As I was coming down 77 for the 10th time, my phone rang. I quickly stopped so as not to lose service. The caller identified herself as Sharon. She told me I would think she was nuts, but that she helps with crime cases and gets images from murdered people and is spiritual and also a horse owner. She had Fancy's picture up on the net and she was feeling my pain and distress and wanted to help me. She felt Fancy was communicating with her. Fancy is not a theft victim, she is okay. She assured me that I was going to find her. Sharon told me that the picture she was looking at of me and Fancy was confusing to her because Fancy has a black saddle on in the picture. Sharon was seeing a saddle with a black suede seat, but lots of silver and lighter oil tooling. She described my barrel saddle perfectly and this is the saddle that Fancy's is wearing.

As we continued to talk, Sharon teased me that she was seeing a pack of Kool's hidden in the bottom of my black saddle bags, the kind with the Velcro closures. She said Fancy was hurting from the cinch being so tight and sweating. I had just cinched up before

the accident! She told me to look NW of the accident scene. She was seeing Fancy near a lake. She said she wasn't moving around and had just had a good drink of water. She was feeling distress from Daniel and all my loving concerned friends kept breaking into her images and confusing her. Who the heck is Daniel? I told her there was a lake behind Camp Merrill and thanks to my truck, I knew it was NW of the falls. I took off for the lake. I lost cell connection, but had her number. I walked all around that lake, down in gullies, roamed the woods carrying the food bucket and lead rope and halter. Nothing.

It was clouding up and getting chilly. I went back to the base of the trail to the waterfall and parked the truck and got out with my mangy, old cowboy hat and rain jacket and decided to walk the trail again. I kept calling Fancy, trying to whistle and shaking the bucket. Bobby kept trying to call to ORDER me to come home. My jaw was aching. My neck hurt. I was getting shaky and cold. When I got to the waterfall, I sat down to rest and cry. I was losing hope. What was I doing listening to this woman? I was thinking about a conversation Pete and I had a few weeks ago. We talked about how people who are good with horses are most often very spiritual people. Horses are spiritual. I had a good cry and put my jacket on because it was sprinkling. The sun was shining full blast, but it was raining and thundering. The waterfall seemed to be roaring with the thunder. I needed to get back to the truck. I had a bit of cold coffee left and it sounded good.

Slowly I walked back to my truck, really down and thinking of how my awesome horse had given me so many good memories. She always did me up proud in the show arena on Saturday and out on the trails on Sunday. I remembered how strong and independent she had always been and how I loved to tear down the trails feeling her smooth gait under me and the exhilaration of her energy. I thought about the places she had taken me ... the day I finally found her "sweet spot" ... how much she is like my beloved Poco was. I remembered the love I felt the day Bobby got her for us and how we tore around the bottoms for two weeks and we had to rest before I could go any farther. It started to rain really hard and my phone suddenly rang again, I stopped in my tracks so I wouldn't lose the call, it was Sharon again. She asked me if there were any other lakes around, longer than wide, not man-made, jagged edges and a field on the NW side of the lake. Not that I knew of.

(continued on the following page)

Labor Day Weekend, 2009

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Coming out of the forest, the rain was coming down sideways and the lightning was prolific. It was a wicked storm and Fancy was out in it.

When I got home, Chris and Karen were at the house. We got on Google maps and found two lakes just north of the Camp gate and the aerial maps showed a field on the left side of one! Unbelievable! Sharon said it looked like Fancy was close to some buildings - maybe on private property. The map showed rooftops near the lake that was farthest to the north! Karen got on the net and sent more pictures of Fancy out. Bobby and Chris printed the maps. I was ready to head out. Bobby blew up, no way! We decided instead to go to Fuego's and eat. I could at least eat their chicken soup. Their positive attitudes and hugs felt good. I was so wound up, stressed out, wet and dirty. We got home about 9:30 and after dumping over 3" of rain with the most intense lightening, the storm had finally moved on.

Betty had called again, as had Donna, Debbe and Juls. In fact, I had 18 voicemails. Thank you for all your love y'all. I e-mailed Sharon about finding the lakes and she said she would meet me in Dawsonville on Thursday morning and we would go to work again. I offered to pay her and she was not happy with that.

Sharon and I met at the bank and headed for the lakes. Bobby met us at the farthest lake. It turned out to be on Hidden Lake Road and it was some kind of school property. We found the field. We walked. We yelled. I shook the bucket. Nothing. We went to the second lake. We walked. We called and called for Fancy. Nothing.

We drove up every turn off from the main road ... not passing any possibility. We reached a barbed wire area and knew that Fancy could not be here. The endless barbed wire would block her most likely route from the camp landing strip to this area.

We went back to behind the camp and found an area where the Rangers do all kinds of training. We thought we saw hoof prints in the dirt. We called for her. Nothing. We drove out onto the landing strip. All of a sudden Sharon said her right foot was hurting. As we drove, she said we needed to go back. The pain was easing which Sharon explained meant that we were going away from Fancy. Sharon could feel that Fancy is hurting. Her right foot is sore. Sharon was truly feeling Fancy's pain. She wanted me to take her to the place it had all happened. As we started up the road, a truck was coming at us. I was worried that

there was not enough room on the road for both of us. The truck did make it past us and then skidded to a stop in the gravel. The driver was yelling "We found your horse!".

They had spied the Parelli logo on my front license plate holder and knew it had to be me searching for her. A young gal named Laura, dressed in Crocs and camouflage, got out of the truck holding Fancy's bridle and bit! Laura had laid out of work that day to go fishing with her Dad and a friend. They were looking for a pool at the base of the falls and looked downstream and saw Fancy standing there! She let them take the bridle off and pet her and pull her some grass, but bolted if they tried to confine her.

Laura was leading us right back where I had been the day before ... to the waterfall. Sharon could hardly walk for the intensity of the pain in her heel, but this time it was easing as we got closer. And then I saw my beautiful Fancy ... standing next to a long pool of water on the northwest side of the falls. She had to have bolted in fear to get there. The tremendous downfall and mountain laurel were kind of a natural barrier, protecting her. She had been eating a tree. There was at least three days of manure around her. She smelled so good and felt so soft. She buried her head in my chest, spied the bucket, and sunk her head in to devour what I had brought along with me. My saddle was still soaked from the intense storm the night before, but it sitting straight up on her back. She had some swelling on her belly from the tight girth and the saddle bags and breast collar were still in place. She's got some scrapes and cuts, but nothing bad. Sharon said Fancy's first thoughts were "What took you so long?".

Getting Fancy out of her safe spot was not easy. So much for the theory that she would stick to the trails. She was way, way off the trail and I had in fact likely walked right by her the day before and didn't see her. One of her boots was still on and her right front foot was really sore from the rubbing and wet yuk trapped in the boot. We led her down the trail and all I could do was shake and cry. It was finally over. Fancy was on her way home.

We had cell reception in just one spot and I called Bobby. Bring the trailer!!! His voice was wobbly as we told him where we were.

(continued on the following page)

Labor Day Weekend, 2009
(continued from the previous page)

As we walked down the road behind the Camp, all the guys came out yelling hurrah, petting Fancy and hugging me. One young man picked me up and hugged me and I had to tell him, careful 'bout my jaw. I thanked them all, but asked the name of my "hugger". You guessed it, it was Daniel. Seems he was the one that carried me out of the forest on Friday. He said I made him feel like a hero. Cute kid. This was of course, the Daniel that Sharon was sensing. Robin and Mitch showed up and we loaded Fancy into the trailer and headed for home. She was ravenous after the grass. We cleaned her up, doctored her foot and turned her out in the pasture. All was well again. My Fancy is home.

I learned so much from all this. Wear your helmet (my head injury would have likely been much less severe had I taken a minute to grab my helmet – that I often wear)! Never give up. Friends are so precious. Horse people are extra special people. It's okay to be spiritual and maybe we need to listen to those spiritual voices more often. Don't shut them out or laugh at them. Sharon and I were total strangers until last Wednesday. Tonight she is so much a part of me. She has a horse, too. She wants to learn natural horsemanship ... we gotta get her to Pete's. She didn't have to help me, she didn't even know me.

As Sharon left last night, she asked me if I knew someone by the name of Jamie and if I did, I needed to call him more often. He misses me. Jamie is my little brother.

So many people came to be there for me. I feel overwhelmed with gratitude for all the help and love I received in these last very long days and nights.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You.
Sandy Stephenson

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FREIGHT FEST 2009



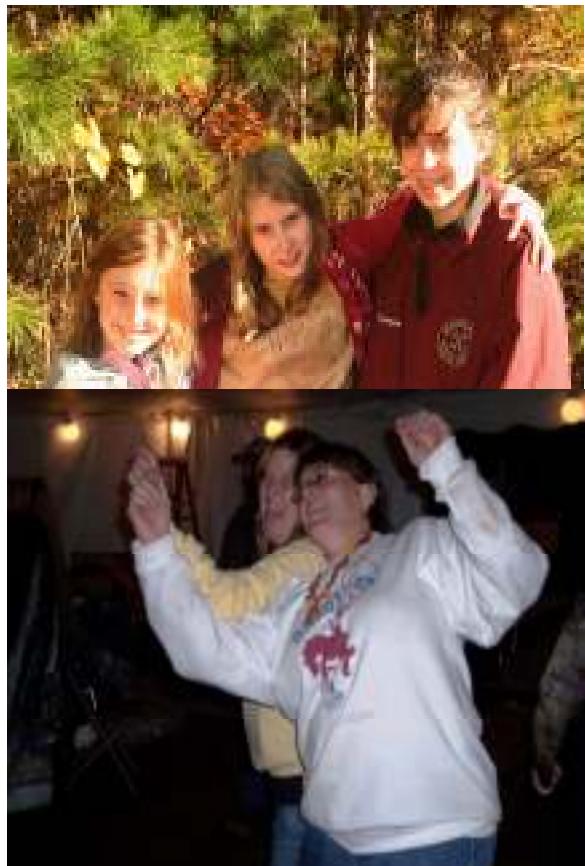
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FREIGHT FEST 2009



The Cup

By Jaye Herrington

If you want to know how generous and giving GERL members really are then just attend one of the live auctions. These members spend endless hours making crafts or purchasing products to donate freely to the GERL. But the auction item of the weekend would really surprise most people. It was a used coffee cup.

A used coffee cup was left on the bumper of a car during Freight Fest. It did have a story and a horse ride behind it. It would not be that easy to replace as it came from our wonderful rides at Leatherwood in North Carolina. I have one of these cups too and I really like my cup ... but it was a used coffee cup, and it was going up for auction.

So our wonderful auctioneer Mickey was going to see how bad the owner wanted the cup back. Long story short ... the owners did not even have to bid on it ... hands went to raising and Mickey went to auctioning ... \$20 ... \$25 ... \$27 ... \$50 ... \$70.00 ... SOLD!! The high bidder turned around and gave the cup back to the owner! Oh how we love the horses!!

Thanks to all of you involved, it definitely was THE ITEM of the auction!

Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue Training

On October 27-28 the Georgia Department of Agriculture's Equine Health Section hosted a Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue Awareness Training Course. The classroom portion was held at the Charlie Elliot Wildlife Center in Mansfield, GA with the hands on and live demonstrations performed at the GDA Mansfield impound facility. Some of the impounded horses were used as the "guinea pigs" for the demonstrations and they all proved to be good sports. Rebecca Giminez, PhD and long time GERL member was the instructor for the class. We are fortunate that she has made Columbia County, GA her new home!

The course focused around emergency situations regarding horses and other large animals. The class learned about everything from the heightened senses of the animals to how to lift a down horse, to considerations for human safety as well. It was a power packed two days of knowledge! When putting this class together, it was my hope to gather a network of trained individuals and professionals who would be willing and capable of reaching out and helping one another and their communities in any disastrous situation involving our equine associates. I believe we achieved that goal and made some life-long friends and colleagues as well. Our class was a very well rounded group from all across the state consisting of "horsey people" and the not so "horsey people" who specialize in other types of emergency situations. In attendance were most of the GDA inspectors, a few GERL members, veterinarians, emergency responders, animal control officers, mounted patrol officers, county extension agents, and individuals

from saddle clubs and other horse organizations. Hopefully we are now prepared to assist in any situation that may arise.

I would like to send out some special thanks to those who made it all work:

To the City of Milton Fire and Rescue – thank you for bringing your equine rescue trailer, fully equipped with the supplies we needed for the class

To Nicole Krysil of Tripping Horse Photography – thank you for volunteering to videotape and photograph the class so that we may use them for future teaching tools

To our inspectors – thank you for all of the help, support, and enthusiasm in putting this together

And especially to GERL – thank you for your encouragement and collaboration in this endeavor and for the scholarships you provided so that we could educate some individuals who could not have attended otherwise!

I could not close without a brief reflection of our dear friend Gene Ensminger. He had a passion for horses and some extra enthusiasm for the rescue of equine. I remember his generous donations of our "Ensminger slings" each and every time we pull out our fire hose slings to help move or lift a horse. Please visit our GDA website (www.agr.georgia.gov) click on divisions, animal industry, equine health) for more information regarding the class, a list of participants, and some more entertaining photos!

Robin Easley - Equine Health Field Supervisor
Georgia Department of Agriculture

GDA Horse Sale

By Leisa McCannon
Volunteer Coordinator

I have been asked to write an article on the GDA Sale Saturday October 17th. Those of you that know me know I am never short of words, but putting them on paper is a whole nuther story.

David and I had been watching the weather all week and all week the weather channel had been saying we were in for a dry, but windy Saturday. Well Saturday was anything but dry. We got to the Jasper County impound, set up the tent and chairs but before we could sit down the mist turned to rain and everything got wet ... including us. Mary Greene showed up with coffee and muffins which was a big hit.



The sale had to be moved into the barn as the rain poured down. About 75 people showed up to see Mickey Farmer auction off the 34 horses. All of the horses were such bargains it was real hard not to bring one or two home, but David keeps me grounded since we already have three. The big price tag went to a great horse named Hercules. He is a big Percheron that at one time had three girls riding him.

All in all, the sale was a big success maybe not in money but 34 unwanted horses found new homes. Thanks to all of you who came out on such a nasty day.



“Broker” Takes a Fieldtrip

Robin Easley - GDA Field Supervisor

On the weekend of September 26th, “Broker” took a field trip. The Classic South Equine Association extended an invitation to the Georgia Department of Agriculture and the Georgia Equine Rescue League to attend the Ford Truck Equestrian Hot Air Balloon Festival put on by Polo America to benefit the troops at Fort Gordon in Augusta, GA. They not only allowed us to set up a booth, but to bring a special impound horse to promote our programs and they did not even charge us! The selection of which horse would get to go was easy. Out of all of the horses at our facilities there was one who has that “special” quality, Broker. He is a registered seven year old sorrel Quarter Horse gelding with a sweet and gentle spirit and a heart of gold. He had not been at the impound very long and was still a body score of 1.75, so surely he would get some attention, sympathy, and hopefully donations.

Inspector Paula Sewell picked up Broker from the Mansfield impound barn on Friday and they were east-bound and down. I met them at the Columbia county animal care and control facility (they graciously allowed us to use their livestock pen to house Broker for the weekend) where we unloaded Broker and got him settled in. He immediately put his head to the ground and began mowing. He was completely content, not caring that he was alone, just glad to tag along. We picked him back up on Saturday morning and trekked over to Fort Gordon for an exciting day – hot air balloons and horses – who would have thought it? Broker had his own pen in the vendor area situated between the GDA and the GERL booths and away from the other horses. As we walked him across the field to our space he did not spook at a thing, and believe me, there were lots of buggars out there. Broker attracted a lot of attention with all of his bones showing, and Paula and I were getting some pretty disparaging stares. GERL members Donna Pieper and Keith Fleming helped us get set up, talked to those who stopped by the booths to learn about the programs, and sold t-shirts. Their grandson Bryce was especially instrumental in helping keep Broker’s pen clean and free of “poop”. On a side note, the opening ceremony was a tribute to the armed forces which featured a display of the flags from each branch flown by members of the CSEA on their horses. The horse that carried the POW/MIA flag is a horse that came through the GDA impound program a few years ago – her name was “Banana Crème”.

There was not a dry eye in the grandstands. Back to my story ... (continued on the following page)



“Broker” Takes a Field Trip

(continued from the previous page)

As the day went on Broker was visited by many – young children, elderly grandparents, disabled persons, and even some active duty soldiers. Broker was used as one of the demo horses for a nutrition, feed, and body score clinic put on by Southern States. He glowed in the spotlight and was perfectly behaved. Back in his pen he was a good sport acknowledging all of those who wanted a chance to pet him and wish him well. He has the instinct to be extra gentle and patient with children. He would lower his head to their reach and even after his belly was full, he would gently take one more bite of hay from the next little boy or girl who offered it. Broker was exhausted as he arrived back at the animal control facility. I am not going to tell you about how Paula got the truck and trailer stuck in the mud there trying to turn around.



Sunday morning we were all back on Barton Field for round two. The wind made it impossible to display the boards with photos of horses, so Broker was definitely the center of attention. Again, he basked in the spotlight and hammed up his moments of fame. We learned that Broker likes treats and will eat almost anything you give him. He munched on some cotton candy, animal crackers, and even French fries – just leave off the ketchup or he will turn his nose up. The highlight of the weekend for me was talking with some of the soldiers who would stop by and want to spend time with Broker because they miss their own horses back home in Mississippi, Arkansas, and even Germany. The weekend was supposed to be centered around supporting the

troops, yet the soldiers and their families gave back to help make a difference in the lives of equine from the state of Georgia. My hope is that those who attended the festival remember that it is because of the sacrifices that the military and their families make that we can all enjoy the love of a horse and the freedom we feel as we gallop across a field. Let no one misuse this freedom to mistreat or abuse the horses we fight to save.



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