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## VBH BOT FYI Zoning

1 message

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To: Dolores Trandel &lt;clerk@barringtonhills-il.gov&gt;

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Horses rescued by HARPS ready for adoption  
By DONNA VICKROY, SouthtownStar  
NW Herald  
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BARRINGTON HILLS, Ill. (AP) — When they arrived at the Barrington Hills farm, they were starving, lethargic and covered in burdock.

They had skin rashes, knee injuries and a profound fear of humans. One was blind in its left eye. Another was the size of a 3-month-old even though it was more than a year old.

But just a month after their rescue from a horse farm in Crete, all 11 equines — 10 quarterhorses and one Welsh pony — were healthy, active and ready to be adopted.

"They're beautiful animals, and if they weren't subjected to neglect, they'd probably go for thousands of dollars," said Donna Ewing, founder and president of Hooved Animal Rescue and Protection Society, a nonprofit organization referred to as HARPS.

HARPS's mission is to protect and rehabilitate horses and other hooved animals through investigation, impoundment, legislation and education. Ewing started the first such facility in the United States.

Her place is a safe haven in a troubled animal world. She takes in neglected, starved and abused creatures and gives back healthy, functioning, beautiful animals.

Though she's already sunk thousands into the care of the horses, Ewing said a minimal adoption donation of \$200 per horse will enable her and her daughter, Ronda Ewing, to continue their work.

In addition to horses, the women have in their care a llama, a donkey, a potbellied pig, assorted dogs and several goats, including Clementine, who was saved from a hoarder situation in Tinley Park five years ago.

All of the farm animals on their spacious 30-acre property are rescues. The Crete rescue has put them at capacity.

Of course, Ewing said, more than money, she wants to ensure that each horse gets placed in a caring environment, with people who understand and are capable of taking care of horses.

The Crete saga is becoming all too familiar these days, she said.

When people fall on tough times, their pets suffer, too. Animal shelters are packed with proof.

But horses can't be dropped at the local shelter. There are, in fact, few options for horse owners who encounter economic hardship.

Such was the story of these 11 horses. They were owned by a Jose Nevarez, of Lowell, Ind. He used the animals in a traveling rodeo.

Ewing said Nevarez lost his job and eventually his farm and was left in a difficult predicament.

He couldn't care for the animals anymore. He was unable to sell them. He couldn't even afford to have them euthanized, a procedure that can cost upwards of \$400 per animal, Ewing said.

Nevarez worked out an agreement to leave the horses for a month at a farm on Exchange Road in Crete. The owner of that farm was living in Texas but had tenants on the property.

Several passers-by alerted investigator Phyllis Piunti, of Crete, that the horses appeared to be in distress.

When Piunti arrived on the scene in early July, the animals were already hungry and thirsty. She promptly contacted Ewing and arrangements were made to immediately transport a mare and foal to HARPS.

"They scored a 1 1/2 on a scale of 10," Piunti said. "If they had stayed much longer they would have died."

The other horses, which scored between a 2 and 3, could not be shipped to the Barrington shelter until they received clearance from a veterinarian.

Meanwhile, Nevarez was also contacted. He agreed to relinquish ownership, thus avoiding charges of animal neglect and abandonment, Piunti said.

Over the summer, Ewing provided Piunti with feed for the remaining nine horses. Piunti also arranged for a veterinarian to make regular medical checks.

Despite their best efforts, the horses were succumbing to the bad conditions.

"After Phyllis showed me pictures of these emaciated animals in August, I said let's get an emergency health pass for them or they're going to die," she said.

On Sept. 9, the remaining horses arrived at HARPS. Ewing put them on a special high protein diet that called for seven feedings a day.

"It was around the clock," she said. "We were also fortunate to have lush pastures this summer. There's nothing better than fresh grass for them."

Several of the animals also had to be treated for medical conditions, including injuries that had gone unattended and skin conditions brought on by being left outside in the rain.

The treatment worked and all of the horses have recovered.

"We need to place at least eight of them by winter," Ewing said. "We just don't have the time to give each animal the care it needs on a daily basis."

Though she tries to remain detached, Ewing admits it is difficult to part with the animals that she has nursed back to health.

"It's horrible, but I don't want to become a collector like those hoarders. And I've got to make room for the next batch."

Mostly, she said, "I want these guys to be ridden, to be enjoyed, to be loved."

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