



PHHWV Sasha with PH members Amber Mathews and Renee Neubauer. Check out Sasha and Amber's journey with PHHWV on *We Fostered a Neglected Pony*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=idOziyAqwgE>

Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria Inc. (PHHWV) is a non-profit organisation committed to providing hope for equines through education, rehabilitation and advocacy.

PHHWV PURPOSES

- To provide assistance to horse owners through education, advice and support to rehabilitate their own horses.
- To rescue and rehabilitate any horse found abandoned, sick, injured, mistreated or neglected or likely to become in such condition in the imminent future.
- To provide emergency care, treatment and assistance to horses.
- To educate the community on the plight of neglected horses; and
- To contribute to the development of improved government legislation and policy relating to the welfare of horses.

A very big thank you to all our volunteers who make this possible.

Committee

Executive

Rhonda Petschel, President
Renee Neubauer, Vice President
Cassandra Male, Secretary
Shirley McPherson, Treasurer

Ordinary

Silvija Footner
Toni Harris
Angela Smith
Vaso Elefsiniotis
Tessa Reimers
Maria Auhl
Jenni Cooper

Contact us

Stay in touch

 1300 881 606

 0419 515 931

 info@phhvw.org.au

 GPO Box 1991
Melbourne VIC 3001

 phhvw.org.au

Follow us



REG: A0027152D
ABN: 96 820 500 367

President's report



As summer looms you will find me sitting quietly with my herd as the sun sets, and the smell and the sounds seep deep into my soul. Of course there is also horse husbandry-needs to interrupt the calm, this year seedy toe and weight management are demanding my undivided attention. I am sure you will agree as guardians we are always learning, both for Project Hope and our horses.

Firstly an update on volunteer movements:

After 4 years as Horse Database Coordinator, Anita Romleigh has resigned. During her time she not only displayed great efficiency but also improved our record keeping and collecting of data. Anita has been a wonderful team member who volunteered her time whilst working full time. Anita, we wish you restful evenings and weekends, and thank you for your contribution to the organisation. Anita promises she will volunteer at our events, so many may meet her and Mandi together one day.

Gina Harris has joined the committee and has seamlessly stepped in to take up the role of Horse Database Coordinator. Gina has been involved with Project Hope for many years, originally developing the Horse database and the Horse report database, then working on the sideline assisting with Operation Reconnect. We could not have organised succession planning any better.

The committee has been kicking goals with administration, and we have some very talented people who are leading us into the current age of technology. Cassandra is working on online forms and our filing system. Gina has created and is coordinating a mapping system that provides a visual of our membership, our horses, volunteers, stakeholders; and has also developed a very efficient short-term care sheet recording the rehabilitation status for the horse welfare working group. Maria is developing an efficient horse reporting system that automatically gathers our very important statistics. As these new processes are bedded down our administration will be more streamlined.

Renee Neubeaur continues to lead a strong social media presence and has liaised with our sponsors Scoot Boots and CEN to launch a very exciting Christmas raffle. The prizes are of great value and tickets are limited so don't miss out. Members get first opportunity, so check it out on our members FB page.

We've been busy with Events and Education, being invited to meet-and-greet at the gates with the Gisborne and District Adult Riding club, a stand at the Woodend Market, Lancefield Agricultural Show, Bairnsdale Show, Education Day with Ian Shaw, a Horse Representative training day at Wangaratta and our second online training session. Thank you to every member, pony and horse for their contribution. And of course, many of us attended Equitana, taking the opportunity to meet and thank our sponsors and proudly watch Ian Shaw present on the Saturday. Everyone reports having a great time together at these events.

Over the first two months of the season our Horse Report team were very busy but once those good October rains came through, there was a slowing down of the number of reports; having said that, there have been some laminitic cases of late. There are some heartwarming stories of our horse representatives going to great lengths to help people and their ponies. The horse welfare group continues to support our members and equines with six in short-term care currently, and 24 rehomed for the year.

Take care over the summer months, have a wonderful festive season and a rejuvenating New Year. See you in 2025.

Kind regards

Rhonda Petschel
President

Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria Inc.

SUMMER
NEWSLETTER
2024

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MEET OUR MEMBERS



Justyne with Chas; Photo by Lisa Hyville

Justyne

I started my passion for horses as a child like many of us do, however it wasn't until I was an adult that I got to live my dream to its full potential. Now I'm lucky enough to live out my dream with Chas (Welsh Pony), Marty (Shetland Pony), Ed (Quarter Pony) and Star (Standardbred).

I have been a member of Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria for several years as I'm passionate about horse welfare in all aspects.

Project Hope does an outstanding job in rescuing, educating and providing assistance where necessary. In the future, when it's time for the boys to cross the rainbow bridge as they have their buddy system in place, I will be looking towards Project Hope to continue to live my dream and to ensure my boys have their much-needed buddy and continue to live the life they all deserve.

Thanks, Project Hope for the work that you do and thanks to my boys for all the joy and memories so far.

Reunited:

A heart-warming story of two ponies

By Anne

Part 1: 2012

It began with a phone call from then PH President, Sue Kirkegard, asking if I'd be willing to take on a little pony which was in the process of being surrendered. I'd always wanted a miniature/shetland as a companion for my own horse so when Sue rang and announced, "I've finally found you a tiny, black pony", I jumped at the opportunity and said, "Yes please!" However, there was a catch. Two ponies were being surrendered together - one was severely laminitic and the other one was reportedly in good health. I remember feeling quite concerned for their wellbeing as they came as a pair and my intention was to only foster one. I thought to myself they shouldn't be separated but I wasn't experienced with laminitis, so I reluctantly agreed to just take the non-laminitic one. This decision was made somewhat easier when Sue assured me that a wonderful home had been found for the laminitic one with a PH member who had knowledge of and experience in the management of laminitic ponies.

The ponies' background was sketchy to say the least - apparently they were bred by their elderly owners and had lived their entire lives on a property near Coalville, close to the rural town of Moe, in Gippsland. The property had been sold and the ponies needed to be urgently rehomed. They were already in their teens and it had been many years since they had been handled, having been left to roam a 12-acre paddock with minimal human contact. The ponies were extremely reactive, wary of people and previous attempts to get near them had failed. Time was running out and they were at risk of being euthanised. At the 11th hour, a member of the local community heard of their plight and made contact with Project Hope who, after securing 2 short-term carers (Diane and myself), agreed to take them on.

Although Sue had not seen these ponies, she kept both Diane and myself updated as new information came to light. The very nervous, laminitic one was named Neddy and the slightly calmer one was called Bunny. Diane was to have Neddy and Bunny was to stay with me. I was quietly relieved I was getting Bunny, and naively thought to myself that after having large performance horses for many years, looking after a small pony would be a walk in the park.



There was no doubt in my mind, I had formed a picture of this cute, cuddly pony (the one you see in Thelwell picture books) quietly stepping off the float and grazing happily ever after with my horse!

Transport was finally organised and the plan was that a few local PH volunteers would entice the ponies into a makeshift yard. After being contained, they would be coaxed into a small cattle trailer before heading to my place. Bunny would be unloaded first and the trailer would then continue to Diane's with Neddy.

After a long and anxious wait, the truck finally arrived with the ponies, along with the group of exhausted, disheveled volunteers to help unload. It had taken them almost 6 hours to round up the ponies from their 12-acre paddock and herd them onto the truck!

After much anticipation, the trailer was backed right up to the door of my stable block and I waited to catch my first glimpse of them. The ramp was lowered and all I could see were 2 wild-eyed, identical black ponies, each with a white star. Understandably, the poor little things were extremely frightened and traumatised by their ordeal. As they were unhandled, it was impossible to get halters on them so we thought we'd block Neddy while we unloaded Bunny first.

However, they had other ideas and before we could work out which pony was which, one of them suddenly scrambled down the ramp. Because his feet were severely slipped, he could not move quickly and he literally tumbled onto the ground. We quickly closed the ramp back up but it was too late, we realised the wrong pony had been unloaded - I had Neddy and Bunny was still on the trailer! There was no way we were going to be able to swap them so from that moment on, I began my journey with Neddy.

As the trailer carrying Bunny disappeared down my drive, all I could hear were the sounds of them calling out for one another - Bunny was on the trailer and Neddy had run down to the back of my stables and was hiding in a corner.

I will never forget their gut wrenching calls to one another and I was wracked with guilt that I had not taken them both.

Part 2: 2012 - 2020

The ensuing years could not have been more different for both ponies but that lingering desire to reunite them never left me.

Bunny was dropped off at Diane's and upon arrival, it was discovered that he had a small squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) on his penis that needed to be monitored closely. He was handled daily and within a very short space of time, quickly became a quiet, gentle pony who was a delight to do anything with.

Over the years, he had several short-term carers and seemed to adapt easily to new environments. Each carer was made aware of Bunny's SCC with the strict undertaking, this was to be regularly monitored and any changes reported to Project Hope. Finally, Bunny was rehomed to a PH member and unbeknownst to me, was only a 10 minute drive away from his little brother, Neddy.

Neddy, on the other hand, stayed with me the entire time and was... a nightmare! So much for getting my perfect cute, cuddly pony - Neddy was the exact opposite. He was so traumatised in the first few days after Bunny left, I could not enter the stable without him rearing, spinning, snorting and trembling. He was so frightened and would regularly throw himself on the ground. He would shake uncontrollably if I went near him, was terrified of his water bucket and he would jump at the slightest noise. I pony-proofed the stable yard and he would spend most of his time huddled in the corner looking so depressed. I felt completely ill-equipped to deal with such a traumatised little boy and seriously reconsidered my ability to keep him. I didn't know what to do, so in the end, I did nothing ... except put the radio on and sit with him. I would read a book, talk on the phone, work on my laptop - anything to get him used to human contact and help gain his trust in me. My big horse was always paddocked next to him for company and he was such a calming influence.

Day by day, his snorting and wild-eyed look diminished and by the end of the second week, I managed to get a halter on him. He would never let me walk behind him, always spinning round to face me. He reacted to every noise and would jump if I sneezed or tried to do anything without giving him plenty of warning. Neddy was scared of his own shadow but I persevered and gradually began the slow process of catching him using a long piece of rope which I would leave on the ground. He was terrified of the rope 'following' him and would back himself into a corner whilst snorting wildly at it. I also introduced him to being touched - initially he would recoil but slowly he began to relax and would allow me to brush him.



As the weeks passed, Neddy remained in the stable and house paddock as the only way I could catch him was to permanently have a 5 metre lead rope attached to his halter which I could easily and quickly stand on to catch him. He was beginning to look forward to his food and I would use these treats when I was leading him up and down the stable block.

Ned's feet were in a terrible state and I knew it would take months of trimming to correct his severely deformed hooves caused by his chronic laminitis. Although he would barely tolerate me brushing him, there was no way he would let me touch his legs. The only solution was to sedate him, so for 6 months my vet and farrier worked together until Ned's feet began to return to their correct shape and he was able to walk properly.

Neddy was definitely hard work in that first 12 months - it was 3 steps forward and one step back with him and every single experience needed to be explicitly taught, repeated multiple times and positively reinforced.

He was still very tricky to catch but I gradually reduced the length of his lead to 1 metre and he would only walk a few steps away from me before stopping. He was now out in the paddock with my other horse and was much happier, even though his laminitis was difficult to manage and his grazing times needed to be closely supervised.

There were also many other 'firsts' for him which I had always taken for granted with my other horses - floating, rugging (initially took a week of resting a towel on him), tying up (without him pulling back and trying to hang himself), worming, having his teeth done, picking up his feet etc. Whilst I was learning to understand Neddy, he was teaching me so much more - patience, lateral thinking, perseverance and unconditional positive regard.

Part 3: 2020 - 2024

Fast forward to 2020 and I'd had Neddy for over 9 years. Whilst he was still very nervous around other people, he trusted me and I could do almost anything with him, provided I was calm, patient and didn't rush him. Over time, he slowly became less anxious and his beautiful, gentle nature started to shine through. After all these years, I finally had my little black pony with all his quirks and anxieties...and I loved him!

However, there was one crucial piece of the jigsaw puzzle which was still missing.

As fate would have it, I attended a PHHW function in early 2020 and heard that Bunny was looking for a new home. I could not believe he'd become available and begged the committee to consider me. I had never been able to erase the image of Neddy and Bunny calling out to one another all those years ago and all I wanted was for them to be reunited.

Unfortunately, Bunny had fallen on hard times and he had essentially been abandoned by his last 'carer' who had moved and left him behind. The owner of the property had contacted Project Hope and asked for Bunny to be collected. The committee accepted my application to become Bunny's new long-term carer and I eagerly drove the short distance to pick him up. I was so excited and couldn't wait to see if Neddy and Bunny would recognise one another after so many years apart.

When I arrived at the property to collect him, I could immediately tell that something was terribly wrong. Bunny was covered in flies and as I approached him, there was an awful stench. His penis had several massive growths which were weeping, infected and crawling with maggots! He could barely walk and was in the most terrible state - it was very confronting and extremely upsetting. I loaded him onto the float and drove home, ringing Linda Menzies (former PH committee member) to inform her of his condition.

The moment I took Bunny into the stable where Neddy was waiting was one I will never forget. They whinnied to one another and their mutual recognition was immediate. Straight away, they began nuzzling, licking, sniffing and rubbing up against each other. Neddy was sniffing Bunny and curling up his nose but I think that was because of Bunny's terrible smell. I knew then that I had made the right decision and they would never be separated again.

However, the ponies' initial reunion was short-lived as Bunny was very unwell. After several phone calls between myself and members of the PH committee, he was seen by Dr. Gareth Trope at South East Equine Hospital and underwent major surgery within 3 days of him coming to me. His SCC had not been monitored by his previous 'carer' and had rapidly spread.

Gareth was able to remove most of the malignant tissue but was not able to gain clear margins due to the extensive damage. He wasn't confident that Bunny would survive beyond 12 months and felt his prognosis was extremely grave and that any care would most likely be palliative.





Bunny (in the foreground) returning home after surgery, 2020

This was the most devastating news for poor Bunny and such a cruel twist of fate that after nine years apart, the ponies' time together was going to be so short lived - it was tragic news.

After discussion with PH and Gareth, we decided to trial intensive chemotherapy just to try and slow down the return of his cancer. Every 2 weeks for 6 months, I would take Bunny to the hospital for his treatment. I would often take my big horse Cooper with him for company as Neddy was too scared to come in the float.

Bunny attending South East Equine Hospital for chemotherapy, accompanied by Cooper for moral support!



After a further 6 months, there were no new growths and we were quietly optimistic about Bunny's survival. After 2 years, he had 4 monthly reviews and after 3 years, Bunny was down to biannual reviews.

In May 2024, Bunny had his final appointment and was declared cancer-free. This was a miracle! The expertise of Gareth and level of care provided at South East Equine Hospital, combined with the wonderful support of PHHWV needs to be acknowledged. Their intervention and willingness to take on such a risky operation has given Bunny many quality years of life left to spend with his older brother Ned - that for me is the most fulfilling reward, and has enabled this remarkable journey to finally come full circle.

Part 4: November 2024

Neddy and Bunny are two peas in a pod! They spend their days grazing side by side, snoozing, grooming one another, having kicking matches, somersaulting under fences, getting into terrible mischief like escaping down the road and getting frogmarched back by the neighbours and generally just enjoying life together.

Neddy is still nervous and flinches if I sneeze, cough or make a loud noise. He can be tricky to catch, hates being rugged and requires a calm, quiet, routine in order to feel safe. He likes to play by the rules and flourishes when his environment is predictable. He does not cope well with change or anyone else handling him and notices if any items in the stable block have moved and will not come in. He is usually a few paces behind his younger brother and relies on him to take the lead.

Bunny on the other hand, is the exact opposite. He is the ring leader and is bossy, brave and confident - nothing fazes him and he loves to investigate everything. Eating is his favourite pastime and he is always first at the door in the morning, with his partner in crime bringing up the rear. His 'man parts' are regularly checked, much to his disapproval! The ponies are quite old now - Bunny would be in his late twenties and Neddy would be in his early thirties. Their tiny white stars have spread and their faces are now predominantly grey - but they are happy, healthy and living their best lives...together.

Being their foster mum has been one of the most rewarding opportunities I have ever experienced - thank you PHHWV for this privilege.





MEMBER NOTICES

HOPE FOR HORSES CHRISTMAS RAFFLE



Purchasing a [Project Hope Horse Welfare](#) Christmas lottery ticket puts you into the draw for a chance to win one of our five incredible prizes, kindly donated by [Scoot Boots](#), [Horses and People Magazine](#) Cristina Wilkins, [CEN Horse Nutrition](#) and renowned author [Melody Horrill](#).

Our raffle is a great opportunity for supporters and members to win great prizes and at the same time, provide care and support for the horses surrendered to us.

Since January 2024, 121 horses have been reported (with many cases are still ongoing), and 27 horses have been taken into care. The average cost of a horse going through rehabilitation is \$3000 - and that is when everything goes well. All our work for these horses' rehabilitation is based on volunteer help.

Enter the draw to have a chance to win great prizes and help horses in need.

Wishing you all a safe and happy Christmas.
From the Committee of Project Hope.

**LIMITED TO ONLY
100 TICKETS**

**HOPE FOR HORSES
CHRISTMAS RAFFLE 2024**

GO TO
<https://www.raffletix.com.au/phhwv>

OR SCAN THE CODE



First Prize

Scoot Boots Voucher, value \$310

Second Prize

Applying the Five Domains Model to the Welfare Assessment of Sport and Recreation Horses Online Course, UNE – Donated by Cristina Wilkins, value \$200

Third Prize

CEN Oil 4.5 litres flaxseed oil for horses on he market - Donated by CEN Nutrition, value \$67

Fourth Prize

‘Sheltered’ – Stories of rescue animals and the people who were saved by them. Signed and donated by author Melody Horrill, value \$37

Fifth Prize

‘Sheltered’ – Stories of rescue animals and the people who were saved by them. Signed and donated by author Melody Horrill, value \$37



MEMBER NOTICES

Be part of making history - call to members from Trish Hartshorn

October 2025 will be very special time for us all at PHHWV for it is this month 50 years ago that Val Collingwood rescued a horse named 'Hope' which led to the formation of our society the following year. This is an incredible achievement for everyone involved over those years.

To celebrate our wonderful work, we are going to write a history of these 50 years. Please do not pass up the opportunity to contribute to this - it cannot be written without YOUR help, YOUR memories, YOUR photographs.

We have 400 + members some of whom are only very new but many who have been with us for years who will no doubt have stories to share. At this stage the bare bones are being put together, the skeleton if you like of what we hope to achieve. You will provide the flesh and blood and the heart. This is OUR history and you are all an integral part of it.

The aim is for the book to be launched in 2026 to commemorate the 50th anniversary - this may seem like a long time off but we all know how quickly time flies and there's a lot of information-gathering that has to happen next year.

So please be a part of this wonderful tribute to the work of PHHWV.

Questions, photos, stories, ideas - email me at:
projects@phhwv.org.au



Events

WOODEND MARKET - SEPTEMBER 7

By Trish Hartshorn

Following last year's successful outing to the Woodend Farmers' Community Market, PHHWV stalwarts Toni Harris and Trish Hartshorn once again set up the marquee and spent four hours chatting with market goers who were very interested in our work. We were also joined by member Siggy Thiner.

We had some second-hand items to give away but the generous folk insisted on making a contribution to the work of PHHWV and we ended up with approximately \$220 in donations and all items gone. We plan on making this an annual event as we've now had two very successful years, raising awareness about Project Hope, and increasing our membership.

GISBORNE TTT 'TIN-SHAKING' - SEPTEMBER 29

By Renee Neubauer

PHHWV attended the Gisborne District Adult Riding Club TTT Showjumping Day. PH members Angela, Toni and Renée were invited to be on gate duty to raise community engagement and awareness efforts which was well-received, when they heard that a horse in a float driving in, was in trouble. The horse (Dotty) was down and had several deep traumas to her legs. Toni immediately offered help and support- as she always does, and a vet attended.

"A huge thank you to everyone who helped us today, I didn't catch all the names but thank you to the two women who helped me get Dotty out of the float and calmed me down, it was quite traumatic for us both! To Toni at Project Hope especially, you were so wonderful and thank you so much for your support and kindness. She travelled home perfectly (and very slowly!) And is rested up in a stable for a few days.' Emily

We wish Dotty and Emily a quick recovery. Dotty was looking to you for reassurance the whole time. She's a beautiful horse.

The club did a great job in promoting PH for which we are grateful.



Project Hope volunteer Angela Smith on gate duty at Gisborne



Events

LANCEFIELD SHOW - OCTOBER 20

By Mandi Herauville

Project Hope volunteers attended the Lancefield Show in October, and the location was fantastic and in line with the traffic coming into the showgrounds. This allowed a VERY experienced group of volunteers to take full advantage of the passing traffic and engagement was the highest seen at an event so far. The timbre of conversation was very high & many, many people praised the organisation & showed genuine interest in what we do & who we are.

This is all down to the quality and experience of the volunteers and the friendly crowd at this event and location.

A highlight for show-goers was Molly the miniature pony for sure! A massive thank you to Karen & Toni for bringing her & handling her so kindly throughout the day, demonstrating welfare in action.



Another highlight was book-signing by our special guest author Melody Horrill. Melody is a journalist, former TV presenter and co-chair of the Jane Goodall Cetacean Committee. She is the author of a memoir *A Dolphin Called Jock*, a passionate animal and nature lover and advocate. Her most recent book is *Sheltered: Stories of rescue animals and the people who were saved by them*, featuring some of Project Hope's horses. Melody not only signed books but also donated copies for our fundraising.



We would like to send a special thanks to the organisers of the Lancefield Show, PH volunteers Toni, Karen, and Renee, Molly the Pony, and author Melody Horrill for helping to make this event a great day for all.



Events

IAN SHAW'S HORSEMANSHIP CLINIC AT BALLARAT ADULT RIDING CLUB - OCTOBER 20

By Tessa Reimers

Ian Shaw's horsemanship clinics are renowned for the gentle imparting of his skill, wisdom and compassion to our faithful equines and their carers. The latest Education Day, on 20th October 2024 at the great facilities of the Ballarat Adult Riding Club, was no exception. A fantastic day of learning and socialising was had by all. And Ballarat kept the weather mild and pleasant.

There were five lucky local horse women and their horses and a handful of others looking on or supporting. A heartfelt thanks goes to Ian and PH volunteers Alan Salter and Steve Enright for making it such a successful day. Claire, another PH member was able to bring her horse, and a few participants were excited to join the PH team.

The morning session, a generous half an hour each of individual work with the horse and owner, mainly consisted of familiarising the horse with the space and building a connection between human and horse at liberty. Several horses, unsurprisingly, had some anxiety separating from their stall or the area where the other horses were. In a relatively short time, their focus shifted to Ian and/or the carer. This was achieved through attuning to the horse and linking behaviour with feeling and effective and well-timed positive and negative reinforcement. It was wonderful to see the transformation and progress made. Most of the horses had a fun time figuring out who the handsome four-legged friend ... or foe was in the mirror of the indoor arena.

A lovely lunch was hosted by the riding club and participants brought treats like brownies and homemade raspberry jelly slices – thank you! It was nice to relax with other like-minded horse people and hear their stories.

The afternoon session built on the morning's work and involved riding for some. Riders / owners brought their horses and 1-2 issues they wanted to work on. For instance, one lady wanted to improve her horse with regards to picking up and cleaning the feet (a problem that seemed to disappear after some time on connection). One lady wanted more motivation and energy from her horse at the trot and it was amazing to see the lengths Ian went to 'inspire' the horse to follow him through and over poles in the sand arena. No wonder Ian is so fit!



Events

Some of the take-home messages from Ian centred around being a good leader for our horses and taking active responsibility in that privileged role. He shared stories of the lives of PH horses – some whose trajectory was changed immeasurably for the better through patient care, noticing the horse and being aware that we, and they, are always communicating something, never acting in anger, and persistent incremental training with respect to the horse's anxiety threshold. PH had approached Ian for help on what was to become his first PH horse. The gelding was at risk of euthanasia due to behavioural issues particularly when trying to float him. He overcame this and went on to be a useful partner at an Agricultural College where Ian taught about safe horse-handling (later developing a program by the same name). This lovely, gentle horse then lived out his days happily with a family with small children. What a turn around!

The one thing Ian is most passionate about apart from basic horse welfare (and it is a big part of that anyway) – is to have FUN together! He urges riders and owners not to bore your clever horses with repetitive drills if they already are confirmed in that aspect of their training. I hope it inspires more people in the community to get involved, have fun and join PH. And help Ian on his (and our) mission ... to help the horses.

PHHWV aims to provide quality education days for the equine community.

We can only continue this vital work with your support by becoming a member, and by donations.

You can donate to PHHWV via our link here: <https://www.phhwv.org.au/ways-to-give/membership/>.

EQUITANA 2024 & CEN NUTRITION - NOVEMBER 14-17

By Renee Neubauer



Well, we sure didn't expect to attend Equitana 2024 but when **CEN Nutrition** owners Bryan and Peter said come along with us, it was an offer too good to refuse! The hooves were put in motion and CEN came up with some really great ideas to raise our profile and fundraising opportunities.

Bryan was open to all kinds of ideas and was very excited to go along with the GUESS-the-WEIGHT competition of their CEN-ULTIMATE COMPLETE FEED, presented in a clear canister that people could hold and guess the weight of. It sure had a lot of entries – well over 300 ranging in guesses from 500g to 4000g. The actual weight was 1680g and the closest-to-the-weight prize was won by Stephanie from Western Australia. The \$500 gift voucher prize was donated by CEN for use in their online store. This was a massive prize that gained a lot of positive attention, and raised lots of funds for PHHWV.



Events

Then there was the AMBER MATTHEWS FACTOR - the Equestrian Influencer with over 300k followers! **Amber** is a professional horse trainer and content creator - TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Linktree etc. - you name it, Amber is there.

As I write, I still cannot comprehend just what went on each day at Amber's two guest appearances. Seriously, it was like being at the hottest concert in town. Kids were lining up well before 9am to secure one of the 100 exclusive CEN/AMBER/EQUITANA CAPS 2024. Grandparents, mums, dads, aunties, uncles, brothers, sisters and friends were all there, waiting for Amber. The lines were over 200-strong each day. It was by far the most amazing experience to see Amber give everyone such an enormous part of herself. Not one person was turned away without a hug, an autograph and a picture. The crowds adorned her with friendship bracelets, flowers, poems, pictures and gifts. Besides all the hysteria and hype surrounding this, there was a beautiful person who wanted to do more for horse welfare, and having Amber throw her support behind PHHWV was something else! CEN provided the caps to sign for a \$10 donation towards PHHWV.

The 4 days were epic, fun, hectic and I even had my 60th Birthday there! It was one giant party at the CEN stand.



Sharing it with the ever-so-effervescent Tanja Kraus from Tanja Kraus Horsemanship, the crew from CEN and the many members from PHHWV who popped by and said hello. A huge thanks to PH members Rhonda, Angela, Tessa, Claire, Mandi, Shirley and Kathryn who held me up and kept me going over the 5 days. It was a mammoth effort!

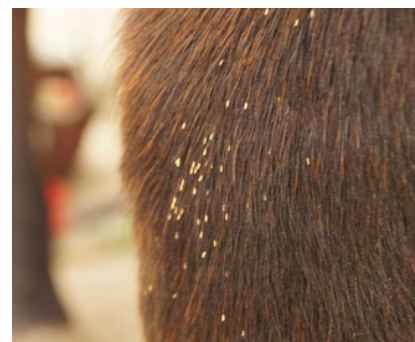


The glue behind all this magic is CEN and their incredible generosity in offering PHHWV such an amazing opportunity. As ambassadors, we cannot be prouder and more honoured to be able to represent CEN in such an arena. CEN helped raise over \$2300 for Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria. We will be posting all the wrap up blogs, vlogs and podcasts so that you can get a feel of what it was like to be there.

Finally, it was with great pleasure that we were able to go over and introduce ourselves to our other fantastic supporter and that is **ScootBoots**. Meeting the team and having a pic had to be timed as their stall was non-stop for 4 days. ScootBoots regularly gives us wonderful donations throughout the year for which we are very grateful.



horse education



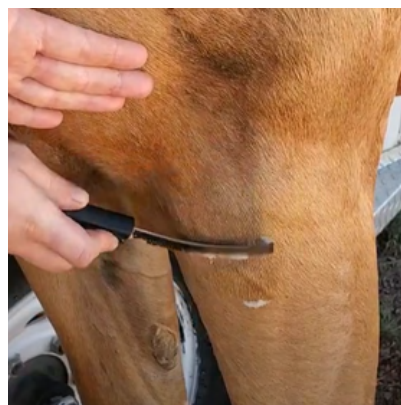
BITING BOT FLIES

Bot flies are a common problem for horses throughout summer and autumn, sometimes seriously injuring themselves in attempts to escape the dreaded bite. In Australia, there are three species of bot fly - *Gasterophilus*: *G. intestinalis*, *G. nasalis* and less common, *G. haemorrhoidalis*. While each species is slightly different in appearance and egg-laying behaviour, their lifecycles and control methods are similar, and they rely on our horses to reproduce. Each female adult bot fly will lay between 150 to 1000 eggs on a horse, mostly on the hair of their legs, shoulders, and flanks. The positioning of these eggs means they're within reach on your horse's mouth if they rub at or bite the area with their mouth. After seven to ten days, the eggs will hatch, and the fly larvae will emerge. While bots are a parasite of horses, they are insects, not worms. Therefore, bots must be managed alongside worms. A management system set up to control worms may not control bots as well.

According to Pony Club Australia Parasitologist Dr Jacqui Panozzo, adult bot flies live for only a week, and females spend the entire time laying eggs on horses. After the eggs have been laid on the horse's coat, the horse ingests the eggs through licking and / or scratching. The eggs hatch within the mouth and larvae migrate through the oral cavity eventually making it to the stomach. Heavily infected horses may show pain and discomfort in the mouth, and this whole process can lead to ulceration of the stomach, loss of appetite, or in extreme cases colic. Within the stomach, the larvae stick to the stomach lining, and slowly develop into mature larvae, before passing out in the manure where they enter the soil to pupate, usually in spring. Adult bot flies may appear around January and continue until the cold weather of early/mid-autumn.

To help manage bot flies, prevention is the way to go. Daily removal of bot eggs from the horse with a bot knife or razor, in an area where the horse does not eat, followed by their collection and disposal, will prevent high burdens occurring - fly repellants may also help keep the biters at bay.

Some home remedies suggest that eggs can be washed off with warm water, alcohol or turpentine. These remedies are based on loosening the 'glue' that sticks the eggs to the hairs, and soaking may be required to loosen them enough. These methods will not kill the bot eggs, nor will treating with insecticides as bot eggs are extremely resilient, therefore the simple method of using a bot knife is seen to be the easiest method to remove eggs.



Video: Bot Fly Eggs & How to Remove Them EASILY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5teRITYmJs>

Bot flies be gone!

<https://ponyclubaustralia.com.au/6112-2/>

Deterring female bot flies from laying eggs is nearly impossible according to Dr. Jacqui - sprays do not work adequately. However, rugging with mesh/lightweight rugs may prevent egg laying on the neck/shoulder areas although the legs will still be exposed. Anecdotally, providing undercover shelters may deter or confuse bot flies, however this has not been proven scientifically.



HORSES AND BUSHFIRES A GUIDE FOR HORSE OWNERS

- CFA FACT SHEET



With the Summer months ahead of us and forecasts of very hot and dry conditions, it's time to consider what to do to minimise fire risks and danger to ourselves and our horses.

Do you have a plan?

You and your animals are at risk of fire if you live near, visit or agist in areas that are:

- heavily forested
- have thick bush or long, dry grass
- coastal areas.

Whether your horses are located at home or on an agistment property, you need to plan and prepare for their safety.

Prepare a safe place for your horse

Horses are quite good at avoiding bushfire if two conditions are met:

- they are given enough room to move freely in a large open space
- there is minimal vegetation in the space.

A large, well-grazed paddock or a series of smaller paddocks with the internal gates left open would be suitable. Ideally it should have a dam where the horse can seek relief from the heat.

A large sand ménage can also be suitable if there are no buildings or vegetation that could catch fire.

On Extreme or Catastrophic fire danger days move your horses to your designated safer area. Do not lock your horses in a stable, holding yard or similar environment as your horses may panic and hurt themselves if confined. Do not let your horses out on roads, as they will be in more danger from traffic and fire.

A horse's natural instinct is to run from danger including bushfire and they will quickly move to burnt ground to survive.

If your property isn't safe for your horse

You may wish to consider:

- agisting horses out of the area during summer
- making arrangements to temporarily move horses on Extreme or Catastrophic fire danger days.

Safer places for horses may be:

- a neighbour or friend's property
- local showgrounds
- saleyards
- racetracks
- pony club grounds.

You could get together with friends, other agistees or club members and arrange a group strategy. If you do agist your horse in a high fire-risk area, it's important to find out the property's bushfire plan.

Before a fire threatens

If your plan is to move your horse/s to a safe location on hot, dry, windy days, you will need to move them well in advance of a fire starting. Once a fire starts, you won't be able to move them safely.

If you do wait until a fire has started before you leave, you risk the serious danger of driving through thick smoke, fallen trees and powerlines, and face the threat of collisions, being trapped or worse. Protect yourself and your animals by leaving early.



Other Considerations

On Extreme or Catastrophic fire danger days you should remove all gear from your horse as it could get caught on fences, melt or become very hot and cause serious burns. Don't leave rugs on your horse.

Permanently identify your horse. This could include branding but microchipping is preferred.

If your horse is difficult to catch you may consider leaving a leather halter on with identification tags.

Ensure your property has a property identification code (PIC) registered with Agriculture Victoria that indicates horses are on the property.



Further info, warnings and advice:

- Visit agriculture.vic.gov.au and search for horses and bushfires for more detailed advice.
- Visit Rural Aid ruralaid.org.au for help after a fire.
- Bushfire safety and property preparation – CFA website cfa.vic.gov.au
- Check the VicEmergency App for up-to date Fire Danger Rating and locations of current fires.
- Social Media: facebook.com/cfavic
- X (Twitter) @CFA_Updates
- VicEmergency Hotline: 1800 226 226.

Personal safety during bushfire

Always put your own safety before the safety of your horses. While horses have a high chance of survival, you are at risk of death from exposure to radiant heat. Ensure you wear protective clothing and drink water. Develop a fire plan that will ensure your safety. The safest option is for you to be well away from high risk bushfire areas on Extreme or Catastrophic fire danger days.

If you cannot leave the area consider shelter options close by that may protect you, including:

- a well-prepared home (yours or a neighbour's) that you can actively defend
- a private bunker (that meets current regulations)
- a designated Community Fire Refuge. Last resort options could include:
- a Bushfire place of last resort (Neighbourhood Safer Place)
- a stationary car in a cleared area
- a ploughed paddock or reserve
- a body of water (such as the beach, pool, dam or river). This does not include a water tank. Dams may not be reliable as their water levels fluctuate and they may be empty in summer.

Note that last resort options carry a high risk of trauma, injury or death.

After the fire

Horses tend to recover well after a fire. Appropriate treatment will soon restore them to full health. They may suffer facial burns and their eyelids can be very swollen to the extent where they cannot open them. A horse suffering from burns requires prompt veterinary attention but there are some ways to make them more comfortable until the vet arrives. Sponge affected areas with cold water. If legs are affected try standing your horse in a bucket of clean water to reduce pain and swelling.

This article has been adapted from a CFA fact sheet, available here: [https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/534/CFA%20Factsheet%20-%20Horses%20and%20bushfires%20\(Versions%202\).pdf](https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/534/CFA%20Factsheet%20-%20Horses%20and%20bushfires%20(Versions%202).pdf)



horse reports

By Jenni Cooper, Horse Reports Coordinator

The following is a summary of welfare concerns received from members of the community about a horse or horses that PHHWV has then investigated.

Cardinia

PH received a report of 5 neglected horses, including 2 aged chestnuts in bad condition. The horses were in a grassed paddock, but their feet were extremely neglected. PH called the reporter, discussed the situation, advised that a Horse Rep. would be sent out, and discussed local options (ranger) and possibly the RSPCA. 2 Horse Reps attended the property and spoke with the horse owners. There are 5 horses, ranging in age from 8-29 years. The 8-yo filly was completely unhandled. The Horse Rep. confirmed the horses' feet were in desperate need of farrier work and made plans to attend the property again to assist with haltering. This is a 'work in progress'.

East Gippsland

An owner reported they needed to find a home for their 19-yo TB as they were relocating interstate. A Horse Rep attended the property and advised that the TB was quite skinny, demonstrated a lovely nature and until recently was ridden by children. PH contacted Racing Victoria to request assistance with the financial cost of rehabilitating the horse which has been surrendered to Project Hope.

Gippsland 1

A reporter advised of a Shetland pony that needed a hoof trim, was quite overweight and believed to be suffering from laminitis. A Horse Rep. attended the property and could see that the pony was not on restricted grazing and was lame. The rep further confirmed that the pony required hoof trimming and left a note on the gate for the owner to contact Project Hope.

Gippsland 2

Report received about a skinny TB with lameness issues. A PH Horse Rep will visit and offer assistance.

Golden Plains

Contact was made with PH regarding a 20-yo, 15 HH chestnut TB gelding that the owner could no longer look after. The owner had been looking for a new home for the horse with no success. Surrender was discussed and approved.

Greater Geelong

Self-report of a 6-yo TB mare with dental issues, long feet requiring trimming and the owner not in a good financial position. The owner had attempted to rehome the horse with no success. Options were discussed with the PH Horse Rep including euthanasia, and it was agreed that the horse had potential as a riding horse if her health issues were addressed. Vic Racing were contacted, discussions between the owner and the Equine Welfare Officer were positive, and the process of surrender via the RSPCA to Vic Racing was explained.

Greater Shepparton

A PH member reported a case of four TBs in danger of being neglected as the elderly owner is ill. A Horse Rep. contacted the member to obtain the owner's name and address of the property, but they have not responded. The Horse Rep. believes that the member may have contacted Racing Victoria as discussed.

La Trobe

We received a report from a person trying to rehome two longtime companion horses that belonged to a friend with a terminal illness. On further investigation it was established that both horses were registered TBs so PH will follow up with Vic Racing to ascertain if they can assist financially for the horses' rehabilitation. The horses are 8 and 14-yo and do not appear to have any significant issues. A PH Horse Rep will visit to assess further.



horse reports

Macedon Ranges 1

A report was lodged regarding 2 aged horses that were abandoned on a property. The current property owner is not horse savvy, and the horses have lived with his cows. The reporter provided photos of the horses and attended the property with a PH Horse representative. As at least one of the horses is a TB the matter was referred to the Thoroughbred Welfare Officer at Vic Racing. They will work with the RSPCA to resolve the matter.

Macedon Ranges 2

We received a report from a horse owner about ill-treatment of their horse by a horse-trainer. PH contacted the reporter advising that unfortunately this case did not fit within PH's scope and advised them to contact the RSPCA directly as they had the authority to enter properties pertaining to ill-treatment of a horse.

Macedon Ranges 3

Self-report of 6 mini ponies that the owner was struggling to look after due to financial difficulties. A PH Horse Rep. attempted to make contact by phone with little response.

Mildura

PH received a call regarding a very skinny TB. The horse owner was contacted and interested in having a Horse Rep. visit to discuss the horse. Prior to the visit the horse's diet was discussed as well as rugging at night given he was so light on. 2 Horse reps attended the property and agreed that the best course of action for the horse would most likely be euthanasia as it was extremely lame, skinny, had skin dermatitis and was underfed. The owner agreed after discussion and PH partially assisted with costs.

Mitchell

A person contacted PH with regards to 2 mini/Shetland ponies paddocked on extremely lush acreage with seemingly unrestricted grazing. The reporter was unsure if the owners were aware of laminitis and requested PH send a Horse Rep. out to have a look and discuss risks.

Mount Alexander

PH received a report from a person in financial difficulty who had 15 horses agisted at several different properties. One horse currently under vet treatment, initially requiring an x-ray, and they were unable to afford the cost. PH contacted the reporter and discussed their situation and request for support; PH will send out a Horse Rep. to visit the agistment properties, prior to approving any assistance.

Pyrenees

PH was contacted regarding a 17-yo stallion that required rehoming due to a domestic situation. The owner also had other horses needing re-homing. PH contacted the reporter, explained that the horses did not fit within our scope for surrender, and suggested that the stallion be gelded. A Horse Rep. in the area was contacted to connect with the reporter to provide support. The reporter will geld the stallion, re-home two of the other horses and euthanase the old pony.

Surf Coast

A horse owner self-reported that they were unable to look after their 3-yo pony, paddocked on lush pasture and in imminent danger of developing laminitis, with no facilities to restrict the pony's grazing. A Horse Rep. attended the property and agreed that it was in the best interest of the pony to be surrendered, with arrangements made.

Yarra Ranges

A horse owner contacted PH about potentially surrendering a 10-yo TB recently diagnosed with an affliction and surgery cost of thousands. They were unable to consider the surgery and were looking for alternative options. We advised that PH was unable to take the horse as a surrender and the owner agreed to investigate further options as the horse's advocate. We recommended our 'Rehoming Responsibly' brochure and details of a stock remover in the area in the event the horse was euthanised.



horse updates



Rescue horses find a home at CCG



Goose, Toni Harris, from Project Hope and Tracey Coates and Peter Coates from CCG.

Reprinted from an article published in the Warragul & Drouin Gazette, November 12, 2024

Two special new neighbours have arrived at Community College Gippsland (CCG) Warragul Campus.

CCG is thrilled to have Goose and Paris, two rescued horses from Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria (PHHWV). In partnership with PHHWV, a non-profit organisation dedicated to saving horses through education, advocacy, rehabilitation and rehoming, CCG is providing a safe and caring home for Goose and Paris.

PHHWV has a longstanding history of supporting horses in need, and CCG is excited to collaborate on this important cause.

The two horses moving to CCG are Goose - a 9-year-old mixed-breed pony from Newham, and Paris a 17-year-old Standardbred mare from Yackadandah. Both of these new CCG 'students' are approachable and affectionate and can interact calmly with children and adults.

Both Goose and Paris were rescued after enduring years of neglect, and their rehabilitation is a testament to the care and dedication of PHHWV. Thanks to the expert care of experienced horse person Tracey Coates, who generously volunteered her time, the horses will receive ongoing care while also providing new opportunities for interaction with students and staff.

Not only will Goose and Paris help keep the campus environment in check, alongside the existing flock of sheep, but they will also bring joy and therapeutic benefits.

Tracey believes horses offer a unique connection with humans, helping to relieve anxiety and stress through their gentle presence.

To prepare for the horses' arrival, CCG trades training pathways students, led by their trainer David Fussell, ensured the campus fencing was properly repaired and secure. This hands-on project allowed students to apply their skills in a real-world setting, while also contributing to the care and safety of Goose and Paris.

CCG chief executive officer Dale Gemmell said 'We are very pleased to be members of Project Hope and provide care for Goose and Paris. This project reflects our commitment to fostering a nurturing and enriching environment for our students and staff. Once settled in, we hope to see Goose and Paris positively impacting the mental health and wellbeing of our campus community.'

Reprinted with the permission of the Warragul & Drouin Gazette
<https://www.thegazette.com.au/news/headline-265>



horse updates



The musings of Molly (aka Project Hope Yarni)

By Trisha Hartshorn

I knew something was up. Mum shaking me out of my slumber, interrupting my dream of lush green paddocks and bucket loads of carrots. It's Sunday Mum - a day of rest! Show me some mercy. I've been hauling that metal contraption around all week, I need my sleep. Well that was a waste of time. I should have realised something was ahoof when I had the session with the beautician yesterday. Stinky potions and lotions, forelock tugged and fussed over.

And then I heard it, the rumble on the gravel. Yeah all you Project Hope neds know what I'm talking about ... the float. Now we all know that never ends well, don't we. I had to laugh, the writing on the side of the float said 'Aire Valley Arabians' I wish!! Not a shred of Arabian in me. I could have kicked up a stink but I had to admit my curiosity was getting the better of me now and as I was fully awake I decided to go along for the ride. So on I go - could have done the limbo under the barrier it was so high but before I had a chance to swivel my bum round, the float door opened and I was being led out.

You've got to be kidding me! I'm at a sports pavilion. A sports pavilion - me - all 8-hands of me. What could I possibly be doing here? Apparently I'm a Damassesbore for Project Hope so I'd better behave.



I got a few appreciative looks from the hoomans but not one of them had any carrots for me. Mum brought that outsized hair net full of hay so I munched on that.

Just when I thought I was in for a cushy day, little hoomans arrived and started patting me. Soon they were all over me like flies. The ears pricked up when one of the little people asked if she could ride me! I'm now on high alert. Did I mention the purple number? Geez what are they thinking - I don't do purple! Does my bum look big in this? Everything looks big in this. Can it get any worse? But you know what? I'm sort of starting to like all this attention - these hoomans really aren't so bad - I've taken a shine to one little poppet, she's about one hand and wearing purple too, so I'm thinking we might bond. No sooner I've made my move, she's whisked away and there's new faces, new smells, more pats. Can I go home now Mum - please? I've shaken more hands today than that King Charlie fellow!



HORSES FOR LEASE



Jazz

Jazz is a 25-yo grey Arab mare standing at approximately 14.2hh. Her past few years have not been her best, but fortunately she has now been given a good restart with her rehabilitation. At some stage of her life, she has had some good handling. We believe she has had a few foals. Due to dental neglect, she will require 6-9 monthly checks. Jazz is microchipped, hooves trimmed and worming regime is in place.

Catching and leading is now a comfortable action for her, however she remains wary with rugging. Jazz is great with the farrier and to worm. Due to her age, she is not suitable for riding.

As the vet commented in her report, "The horse was bright and alert and was a pleasure to do anything with."

Jazz has been in with others and demonstrates normal horse behaviour in a mob environment.

If you are interested in giving Jazz a long term care home, email us with an enquiry at info@phhwv.org.au.

Located in the Mitchell Shire area.

HORSES IN REHABILITATION

Magnum



Rudy



Find out more about each of our horses and leasing arrangements via our website here:
<https://www.phhwv.org.au/our-horses/ready-for-a-home/>

If you are interested in giving a Project Hope horse a long term care home, get in touch with us by emailing info@phhwv.org.au



horses farewelled

It is never easy. This season we farewell PHHWV Candy, Red, Dozer, Star1, Belle, Romeo and Flukey, and send our heartfelt wishes to their rescuers and carers. RIP.

Candy



Red



Dozer



Star1



Belle



Romeo



Flukey



PHHWV Bulletin Board

SAVE THE DATE - Traralgon and surrounds members and horse lovers

Introducing Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria and how we help horses

For anyone interested in:

- understanding current best standards of horse welfare - 5 Domains of horse welfare
- a practical approach to how communities can help horses in need and/or
- becoming a PH Horse Representative.

DATE: Sunday 19th January 2025

TIME: 10 - 4 PM

**VENUE: Traralgon Neighbourhood and Learning House,
11-13 Breed Street, Traralgon.**

Correction: our PHHWV Spring 2024 Newsletter labeled one of our horses incorrectly as *Ripple* (back page) when in fact it is PH Horse **Pocket**. We apologise for this error, especially to the two horses concerned, and thank the member who drew our attention to the error. We have since corrected the name in our online edition.

PHHWV HORSES FEATURED

Stories of rescue animals and the people who were saved by them.

"THIS HEARTFELT BOOK SHOWS THAT COMPANION ANIMALS, JUST LIKE US, NEED A WARM HOME. MELODY HORRILL HAS WRITTEN INSPIRING STORIES OF HOPE."

DR JANE GOODALL, DBE, FOUNDER OF THE
JANE GOODALL INSTITUTE, UN
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Wishing all our
members a Merry
Christmas and a
Happy New Year



PHHWV ponies Neddy and Bunny reunited at last.

