



AEWA Newsletter

ISSUE 2

AUTUMN 2008

Welcome to our Autumn newsletter

THIS ISSUE

RSPCA Training Day Report

Scruffy's Story

Code of Practice News

Welcome to new members

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Come to an AEWA Meeting
- Join as a financial member
- Register your interest as an equine carer
- Register your interest as an area coordinator
- Offer your professional services to horses in need

Dear all,

Firstly a big thank you to our new financial members. The membership money has allowed us to expand our horizons in terms of our activities, and will surely be put to good use this Winter when the calls for help start to come in from members of the public and from the RSPCA... Which leads me neatly on to our first RSPCA training day. The day went swimmingly and we are looking forward to delivering the next unit in April 2008. It was great to see all the participants come along ready to learn and begin to relax around the horses as the day wore on. I think that we created a few horse lovers that day! You can read the report on page 2.

As always in the field of equine welfare, there are times of feast and times of famine. We are rapidly approaching the end of Summer, and as is to be expected, the Tasmanian weather is



Times of feast: munching on spring grass. Although this in itself brings its own worries, such as founder.

keeping us on our toes! The recent cold snap, coupled with the dry weather has seen many owners starting to rug and/or feed out hay already. Stay vigilant this winter, take the time to find out if that skinny horse is a well looked after, older or perhaps sick horse; or if it is one that needs your help.

I hope you enjoy the remains of the Summer with your horses.

Regards,

Christina Urso-Cale, AEWA President

The Business of Rescuing Horses

With each passing season, the AEWA is learning more about the business of rescuing horses. What does it mean to rescue? How do we know when a horse needs rescuing? And how do we know when it's been rescued? As we take more of an active role in this area, we are developing more of an idea of what we can and can't achieve; what we want to see as an outcome in each case; and how we produce our policies and procedures to reflect this. The business of rescuing horses is expensive, time consuming and risky. Yet seeing a horse go from being a lifeless, empty shell to being a healthy, active animal is still one of the most rewarding things a person can do.

Luckily during the summer season so far there has been some respite in the number of horses that we have been asked to help re-home. However, due to the dry Summer and the low yield of hay in the South of the State, we are looking at another hard Winter for many horse owners; which in turn means that we will be learning of more horses in trouble as the year wears on.

If you want to help this coming winter, you can offer a temporary or permanent home to a horse in need through our State-wide carer network. Contact us at info@aewa.org.au for a copy of the form.

RSPCA Training Day

On 31st October 2007, the AEWA delivered the first training unit in a planned series for RSPCA shelter staff and inspectors. Cynthia Cooper provided what turned out to be an excellent venue for our 10 participants at her property in Golden Valley. The day began with a run down of some common equine terms, descriptions of common illnesses and stereotypies; as well as familiarisation with some horse equipment.



Cynthia running through different types of equipment at the beginning of the day

The participants then started to learn the basics of leading and handling horses, as well as getting fully interactive with the use of halters and the feel of the horse (or in this case human!) Although some were initially apprehensive about mixing with the horses, by the end of the day everyone was happily interacting with them, and most had chosen their favourites! The beauty of the environment was that the horses were loose and milling around all day – so everyone got to be up close and personal with them and familiarise themselves with their personalities as they went about their everyday herd interactions.

The afternoon saw everyone have a go at float loading and learn a little about the features of a

safe and unsafe float. This was followed by an insightful trip down the road in the back of the one. I don't think that anyone who went will ever take that journey for granted again. Yes – it's cold, rattly and uncomfortable back there, and when you take corners too quickly it isn't fun!

The day was rounded off with a brief outline of stallion handling and then a foal handling



Learning how the horse 'feels' demo by Cynthia with her new colt, Fieramente.

All in all it was a successful, informative and valuable day. The feedback we received on the day was extremely positive and the next unit is scheduled for April 2008 - in which the participants will be learning to overcome problems with more challenging horses.



Obviously not all horses are worried getting in the float!

Code of Practice News

The AEWA has been invited to attend the next Animal Welfare Advisory Committee meeting on 18th March to discuss the Code of Practice and address any questions that the committee may have in regards to its acceptance as an Animal Welfare Standard under the Animal Welfare Act (1993).

We all have our fingers crossed that there will be a positive response to the Code and we will let you know of the outcome!

Comings and Goings

We say a sad farewell to Rosie Edge as our long serving Secretary. Rosie has been with us since day one of the AEWA, and her hard work and dedication to the cause of equine welfare has been instrumental in making the organisation what it is today. All of the committee wish to thank her for everything she has done for the organisation, for horses and for her tireless efforts with regards to the Jim Turner case. We wish her, Emma and the many horses that she has helped over the years all the best for the future.



I first met Scruffy as I was checking on the Turner horses being kept at Woodbridge. She was one of the 7 mares and a foal being regularly monitored by the AEWA after the tragic death of a mare on that property in February 2007. As I got to know all of the girls individually, Scruffy was always the stand-out for me, not least because she had acquired the damaging habit of windsucking.

"Scruffy was always the standout for me..."

For several months after the seizure of the foal, the girls seemed to be doing OK, and no other horses were seized for some time. However, as time wore on it became clear that they were struggling more and more to keep weight on. Scruffy started spending

most of her time next to a post so that she could windsuck. She only stopped to whinny at me on my arrival, before turning back to her post. She started to drop weight dramatically and when I turned up to the paddock and was faced with the Scruffy that you can see above I immediately contacted the RSPCA. She was seized within days and I followed her progress as she regained weight and vigour at the RSPCA shelter.

When she was able to be adopted out, I put my hand up to take her. She had a major hoof injury on her near fore, and along with the windsucking I knew she would be quite a challenge! But I also knew she would teach me a lot about how to go

Scruffy's Story

about rehabilitating a horse, and that this would be valuable information for the future.

Scruffy was seized in mid-July in a terrible state. She had lost all life in her eyes; her hindquarters were sunken; her backbone was prominent and you could clearly see the knot at the top of her hips. She spent two months at the RSPCA being introduced to hay and slowly brought onto hard food. When she came to me, I started to ramp up her feed ration, and within two weeks she was on two large hard feeds a day with ad lib hay. Her progress was phenomenal, I would never have believed that she was the same horse unless I had seen it for myself! Although much healthier and happier—she is far from a sound and fully recovered horse. I don't know how much irreparable damage has been done from the years of neglect that she has suffered. She still has back problems and has trouble picking up her feet for the trimmer; her hooves have grown out completely and been replaced with good hoof wall, although her injured foot still causes her problems. Her windsucking is improving although I am still experimenting with treatments which may treat the cause of the behaviour. All in all she is a horse very much in transition and in limbo, as she remains officially 'evidence', and the property of the RSPCA. I look forward to the day when she has the opportunity to be truly owned by someone and cared for in the way that she deserves.

Christina Urso-Cale





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The AEWA is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation, founded in August 2005 by a group of Tasmanian horse lovers in order to make a difference to equines through education, advocacy and law change.

The AEWA has succeeded in its first major project to produce a Tasmanian Equine Code of Practice, and this was completed in July 2007.

Now the AEWA will go on to begin working with the RSPCA in Tasmania to achieve a better equine education for their staff, as well endeavoring to improve equine case outcomes. The AEWA will also begin to look at ways in which it can begin to practically help horse owners in need of education and support; as well as horses in need of immediate care.

Visit us at:
www.aewa.org.au

A big welcome to our new financial members

We wish to thank all of our new financial members. Thank you for taking the time to join the organisation and to financially support us. Welcome to:

Jude Needham, Jill Pickering, Cynthia Cooper, Kathy Johnston, Linda Carpenter, Leigh Martin, Amanda Blake, Belinda Casey, Jackie Morling, Lindi Wall, Rosemary Clarke

Apologies to you all for the delay in getting membership cards to you—Christmas and its aftermath got the better of us! Cards will be posted out to you all shortly.

Classifieds



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Mostly crabbet lines, will make a great allrounder or endurance horse
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Carers and Co-ordinators

Thanks too to all those who have registered their interest in being a carer or co-ordinator for the AEWA. We will be calling a meeting in the coming months to get everyone together to discuss the role that these positions will fulfill, and to work out how the network should be instigated around the State.