

# Iowa Equine Rescue & Awareness League

## What's Ahead for Rescue ... and More!!!

By Karla Sibert

We've started off 2009 with a lot of COLD weather, more equines than we've ever had at this time of the year, and a hay availability problem, not to mention skyrocketing costs!

Adopting rescued horses is not an option for most folks in this day and age. It's just too expensive. And fewer people are able to donate to nonprofits such as ours, due to their own immediate needs, which is understandable with today's economy. But with your past support, we have been able to accomplish a lot. Our update on Colton is that he has retained 40% of his sight, thanks to his first eye surgery. We are hoping for a repeat on the second eye, restoring at least 50% of his sight. Additionally, Sonny had his bad eye removed in January, and is doing excellent. If you would like to continue to support Colton and our other current horses, please see our website, at [www.iaeral.org](http://www.iaeral.org). Thank you for your support thus far!

IERAL's adoption rate has always been 95%, and on average we usually have 5-6 horses during the winter. This winter, however, we have 10 horses. We have three Arabians, three Thoroughbreds, two Appaloosas one Standardbred, and our 30+ year young pony, "Sonny."

In the past few months, IERAL has received calls weekly, regarding people who are in need and want to "donate" their horses to our rescue. It's very difficult to share with these people that IERAL's mission/vision is to help equines in Iowa during time of neglect/abuse. We deal with law enforcement during neglect and abuse cases, according to Iowa Code 717. IERAL is the "animal care provider" in regards to Livestock Neglect, specifically to equines. In the past, IERAL has helped remove and care for over 132 horses, 4 cougars, a brown bear, pot bellied pigs, goats – the list goes on and on. But we try our hardest to stick to our main focus and purpose – which is Equines!

Today, some desperate folks wish to rid themselves of their horses. IERAL receives calls such as, "I don't want to take my horse(s) to a sale barn, so we would like to donate him/them to IERAL's rescue." Here, IERAL has to reiterate that we are not a sanctuary for equines, and our resources just cannot help every horse, abandonment situation, divorce settlement situation, loss of job, loss of land, loss of home, etc. We've had people even say this, "Well, if you need me to call local law enforcement, stating that I can no longer take care of my horses, I will, because if you don't help me now, I'm sure I will be turned in for neglect/abuse of my animals eventually, because I can no longer care for them financially." I give people credit when they are so honest, but IERAL does not have the resources to help them.

So, what is the answer to all of the unwanted horses in Iowa? We are not aware of many horse rescues in Iowa that can take on a large scale (12 or more equines). If they are out there, we would love to know their names and contact information, because people are in need of help.

IERAL is fortunate to have foster facilities scattered throughout Iowa, and appreciate each and every one of you who have donated to IERAL's goals. We do not own our own land. We depend on foster facilities with setups that function as temporary housing for horses, but they are currently being utilized to capacity.

Our goal has and will continue to be to educate people on responsible breeding and ownership. We've suggested more than once that a few years' hiatus from some folks' breeding practices might allow the supply to catch up to the demand – **which is basic economics!** However, some people's counter with the following: "This is our business, and we depend on the sale of horses." To which we respond, "I think times have changed. When horses are sold at sale barns for fifteen bucks, or when people are cutting their fences to let their horses wander off their property to nearby neighbors, hoping people

## IERAL 1st Annual Progressive Barn Tour

Come join in this educational, yet FUN event during our Progressive Barn Tour. IERAL will be hosts at three barns located in the Linn County area in May, 2009.

Watch our website for details ([www.iaeral.org](http://www.iaeral.org)) or email [ksibert@infionline.net](mailto:ksibert@infionline.net) with any questions.

### Iowa Equine Rescue & Awareness League



### IERAL Progressive Barn Tour 2009

Our goal is to educate people on "Equine Rescue in Iowa" during our Progressive Barn tour.

You will have the chance to see what our rescue does, meet some of our horses, and learn what to look for when you think you may know of some neglect/abuse with horses.

Dr. Charles Abraham and his crew will talk about medical issues with rescued horses, Law enforcement will speak about what they do, and you will be able to meet some of our special horses!

The cost will be a Free Will Donation, with a "FILL THE BOOT" drive going on. This worked well at our Fall event and I'm sure you won't be disappointed at all you see and learn!

**IERAL**

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will take their animals in, I would think there is a better way of making a living than in horses, especially with today's economy." When people can't make their mortgages, their car payments, or have no health care; goodness - who is going to help all of the unwanted horses in Iowa?

Who is going to bale out the horse industry? Who is going to bale out the consumer whose small business or hobby is costing more than it has in the past? When the margin of profit is zero and you consider yourself lucky just to unload a horse because it's one less you have to feed, where is the horse industry headed? With all of our rich Iowa farm land, one would think that we could set the standard of good equine care, management, and responsible breeding. Our hope is that we can set a good example of positive equine husbandry, and continue to find resources to help horses in

Iowa! Let's take a proactive course in good sound equine husbandry and show the rest of the USA that Iowans can, and will be, responsible horse owners!

With the death of IERAL's friend and past legislator, Mary Lundby, IERAL would like to continue our quest to change Iowa Livestock Laws, Iowa Code 717, and try to help our horses in Iowa in the future. Mary helped IERAL write a new legislative bill, which passed in early 2008, but then was dropped before closing session. We are in hopes that this bill can be reintroduced, and that now, more than ever, people understand the need for sound equine husbandry.

We will continue our fundraising efforts with our monthly e-newsletter, annual fundraising activities, grant writing, and whatever else it takes to keep our mission/ vision sound and moving forward, helping our horses in Iowa.

**Late this spring, IERAL will be hosting our first annual Progressive Barn Tour, which will be educational and fun all at the same time. Watch our website, at [www.iaeral.org](http://www.iaeral.org), for more information on this event.**

**Three barns will be included. You will have the chance to meet some of our horses, including Colton, our once-blind horse; a healthy mare who scored a "1" on the Body Conditioning Scale when we got her; and our Flood Filly, "Cedar" and her mother, "River." You will learn about rescue and the Iowa Code, from true professionals, including veterinarians, nutritionists, equine investigators, law enforcement, foster care families, volunteers, and much, much more!!!**



"Colton," after surgery....

"Cedar," looking....

"Sonny," kind of looking...



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- Playground
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- Wireless Internet



To view our foals: [www.aqhaseiowa.com](http://www.aqhaseiowa.com)



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