

OPINION

Pahrump Valley Times

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Horse rescue

This is in response to PVT April 3 article regarding Diane Davis and her Dream Chaser Horse Rescue. I know Diane and had a chance to visit her place.

She is totally dedicated to her animals, and reading about the harassment she is going through, caused by Shiloh Horse Rescue from Sandy Valley, made me extremely angry.

If Shiloh truly cares about these animals, why are they making Diane's life a living hell?

The numbers of abandoned horses in need of a rescue or re-homing has been dramatically increasing in the past few years. Part of the problem is the current economic crisis, but the real problem started with the closures of the U.S. horse slaughter facilities. These anti-slaughter bills have been pushed for by extreme animal rights groups, such as HSUS (Humane Society of the United States).

HSUS is an animal rights (AR) group that many confuse with local "humane society" shelters. However, Humane Society of the United States is not affiliated with any of them.

They are a powerful, well-funded AR group, which, instead of helping shelters and animals directly, works hard on eventually removing pets from our homes, meat from our tables, leather goods from our closets and animals from zoos and circuses.

Not only doesn't HSUS help struggling shelters, they charge them between \$4,000 and \$20,000 consulting fees. What is especially disconcerting is that HSUS,

a group many expect to care about animal welfare, is making money selling animal euthanasia manuals.

There is a new bill in the U.S. Senate, S.727, that would basically ban any interstate or foreign movement of horses intended to be slaughtered for human consumption. What that means is that horses would no longer be allowed to be transported to foreign slaughterhouses (since all the domestic ones have

been banned), further increasing the number of starving horses in need of a rescue.

Sen. John Ensign is one of the co-sponsors of this horrible federal bill, which does absolutely nothing to help horses. Just the opposite, it causes more horses to be starved with no place to go.

U.S. horse owners until a few years ago had a choice

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what to do with old or sick horses: Kill them themselves, pay a veterinarian to do it, or sell/donate them to a slaughter house where they were killed with USDA oversight.

However, it can cost more than \$100 to euthanize a horse; disposal is up the owner. Cremation can easily cost about \$1,200 while some landfills can charge over \$20 per ton or animal, not including the transportation to the landfill.

There is no market for human horse consumption in the U.S.A., all the market is overseas, and the only users of horse meat in the U.S.A. were zoos and other carnivore owners.

Horse is a healthy lean meat for captive carnivores, such as big cats or birds of prey. Since the majority of horse slaughter houses' market was horse meat for overseas human consumption, the anti-human-consumption-slaughter horse act caused them to close.

This act did not save any horses, as many horses that used to go to a slaughter house still have to be euthanized, as there are not enough rescues to absorb them all.

This act did not reduce the demand for horse meat; it just shifted the supply side to Canadian or Mexican horse processing plants

that are more than happy to supply horse meat to Europeans or U.S. zoo markets. Since demand stayed the same and U.S. horses' meat will be going to waste even more, this act will increase the number of slaughtered horses in Canada or Mexico.

The end result will be more horses ending up slaughtered than if the horse act was never introduced in the first place.

Contact Sen. Ensign and tell him to stop hurting U.S. horses, and in the future simply don't vote for people who don't have true animal welfare in mind.

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