

# A second chance BY VIRGINIA L. DAKINIEWICH

Standing hands above her stable mates and weighing in at over a ton, Queenie is a giant in the equine world. Fortunately, she comes with a big heart to match her physique. Queenie is one of many rescued horses at the Paradise Stable Horse Rescue owned and operated by Lawrence and Bunnie Harasym. Like all the horses at Paradise Stable Horse Rescue, Queenie has her own story.

While attending a horse auction Bunnie noticed a crowd of people gathered at the rear of the auction building. There was a huge white horse. She was not put in the sale as she had a growth on her hind leg. Instead, the big white mare was destined for

the slaughterhouse to be sold for meat. Bunnie persuaded the meat buyer to do a 'buy back,' no easy feat as Queenie was worth a lot of money due to her size.

Bunnie took the horse to her neighbour's for boarding and care as she was too large for the barn at Bunnie's place. After contacting the University of Saskatchewan veterinary college, Queenie became a student training horse for the veterinary students. They came out to the neighbour's place, operated on the tumor and removed it.

Today Queenie is back to health and enjoys life at Paradise Stable Horse Rescue. She is a delight to all who visit. According to Bunnie, "She's just a lump, she loves everybody and everything."

People find her fascinating because she is so huge and yet so calm. She likes to be groomed and get her treats. Queenie has no aggressive streak at all and enjoys human company. She is so gentle that people can actually stand on her bare back.

"Her appearance is distinctive, her



demeanor calm. She is absolutely beautiful," adds Bunnie.

Bunnie estimates Queenie is approximately 12 or 13 years old. She is a Percheron, a breed of draft horse that originated in northern France. Percherons are usually gray or black in colour. They are well-muscled and are known for their intelligence and hard-working nature. They were originally bred for use as war horses and are still used exten-

sively for draft work. (Wikipedia)

At Paradise Stable Horse Rescue there is no such thing as an unwanted or throwaway horse. There is always room in the paddock for one more. There is a "geriatric group" that spend their days in calm and quiet. There are smaller ponies all the way up to workhorses.

Every horse here has a story. Not all are happy ones. A lot of the horses have issues. They have broken spirits, been starved or beaten or otherwise mistreated. Often they are fearful. Some of the horses have serious issues with men and respond totally differently with women. After spending time at the stables in a calm unthreatening environment, they evolve into wonderful horses. Once health issues have been dealt with, the animals are usually fine. Bunnie has yet to find a horse that's a "bad horse."

People can help out the Paradise Stable Horse Rescue by sponsoring a horse. Sponsors make a monthly donation of \$25 which helps provide feed, shelter and health care for the horse.

Sponsors help give the horses a better life and also have the opportunity to spend time with their selected horses. Bunnie has observed the transformation process that occurs when someone who is totally green around horses eventually become comfortable and confident. It is a win/win situation. It helps both the animal and the person involved.

For further information about sponsoring a horse, visit the website: [paradisestables-horsescare.webs.com/sponsorahorse.htm](http://paradisestables-horsescare.webs.com/sponsorahorse.htm).

People can also help out with donations of feed (Early's or Co-op), lumber and materials for gates, shelters and pens, horse blankets, halters and lead ropes, used tack and riding gear. They also welcome manpower and cash donations.

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