Good Things Come in Threes

BY THERESA WARRELL, CO-FOUNDER OF HORSE’N AROUND RESCUE

After surviving starvation and neglect, three rescue horses get a new lease on life.

We were nearing the end of a particularly wet monsoon season. The grasses were tall and lush and the animals at our ranch, Horse’n Around Rescue, were full and round. However, just a few miles down the road from us, three emaciated horses were standing—starving—in bare stalls.

Though surrounded by acres of abundant, nutritious grass, they had access to none of it. Nor did they have protection from the sun, wind, or relentless monsoon rain. They had no food for their bellies and no water to slake their thirst. If only someone would open the gate, allow them to graze, and give them some water. But no one ever did.

It took some work, but eventually Arizona livestock officers were able to arrest the owner and commit the three horses to our care until the court hearing. We named them Justice, Magnificent (Maggie), and Liberty. They were in heartbreaking condition when they came to us. Justice scored a 2 on the Henneke Body Scoring Condition Chart and poor Maggie barely scored a 1. Liberty, a pony, fared slightly better and scored a 3 (ponies are so hearty!). An equine dentist determined they had relatively healthy mouths; their condition wasn’t due to underlying health issues, just pure neglect.

Three weeks later, Justice, Liberty, and Maggie were awarded to Horse’n Around Rescue. They would never go hungry again.

Liberty
An adorable pinto pony, Liberty stole the heart of his 7-year-old adopter, Sean, and snuck up the love of his new family. They enjoyed trail riding and rode out as often as they could.

We joked that Liberty could misbehave simply by standing still. A bit lazy, Liberty sometimes opted out of expending any forward energy. Sean’s father always smiled and said he’d rather have his son’s horse misbehave by standing still than by bucking or bolting. When he did move, Liberty was always careful, taking good care of his young charge.

Sadly, Liberty passed away from colic. Though surrounded by acres of lush grass, they had access to none of it. Nor did they have protection from the sun, wind, or relentless monsoon rain. They had no food for their bellies and no water to slake their thirst. If only someone would open the gate, allow them to graze, and give them some water. But no one ever did.

It took some work, but eventually Arizona livestock officers were able to arrest the owner and commit the three horses to our care until the court hearing. We named them Justice, Magnificent (Maggie), and Liberty.

They were in heartbreaking condition when they came to us. Justice scored a 2 on the Henneke Body Scoring Condition Chart and poor Maggie barely scored a 1. Liberty, a pony, fared slightly better and scored a 3 (ponies are so hearty!). An equine dentist determined they had relatively healthy mouths; their condition wasn’t due to underlying health issues, just pure neglect.

Three weeks later, Justice, Liberty, and Maggie were awarded to Horse’n Around Rescue. They would never go hungry again.

Justice
Justice had some difficulty adjusting to his new life. The sorrel gelding was undoubtedly defensive, and his food aggression got him into a few pickles. He also had to overcome a handful of injuries, choke, colic, and a bad case of pigeon fever. But Justice prevailed! Thanks to laser therapy, chiropractic care, and a series of Bowen Therapy sessions—as well as patience, plenty of food, and love—he became a strong, robust horse and wonderful partner.

He showed such promise that he was adopted by Steve, the co-founder of the rescue. Today Justice lives at Horse’n Around, living a life of love (well-deserved) pampering. He enjoys occasionally working cattle, escorting the trail boss on our fundraising trail rides, and teaching new volunteers how to handle horses. We’ve even put him in an English saddle a few times!

Maggie
Maggie came to us with serious challenges. She was emaciated and had a significant sway in her back. Careful re-feeding helped the former and Bowen Therapy was critical in addressing the latter. Over the next year, she went from near death to thriving. And it turned out that Maggie had some training done at some point in her life. She wowed us all with what she knew and became our premier kid’s horse.

On one occasion, Maggie saved the day when the school barn down the road called to see if they could borrow a couple horses for their summer camp. When the Thursday gymkhana came around, Maggie had the fastest trot and every child who rode her earned a blue ribbon. She became the camp favorite.

In fact, Maggie was so loved that the owners of the barn and summer camp decided to adopt her. For years, she taught the smallest riders, giving them confidence. Suited up with special pads to protect her swayback, she taught her Fan Club how to ride, all while getting a steady diet of carrots and apples.

When the barn closed, Maggie returned to us at the rescue. She retains her princess status and has been retired to roam with her friends in the pasture. Maggie is old now and the vet says her heart is weak—no thanks to the neglect she suffered. But we know her heart is huge, and we will forever hold her in ours.

The day we rescued these three horses, their lives changed forever. In turn, they forever changed our lives and the lives of so many others. ★

Liberty, Justice, and Maggie were awarded to Horse’N Around Rescue.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HORSE’N AROUND RESCUE

PROVIDED BY A HOME FOR EVERY HORSE, AN EQUINE NETWORK PROJECT