

# Turning Point Donkey Rescue

## Quarterly Newsletter

### Spring 2008

**You are a farm**  
 MSUE Equine AoE Team  
 Michigan State University

Do you consider yourself a farmer? According to Michigan's Right-to-Farm Act, if you have one horse or a hundred horses, you are a farmer. As a result, if you comply with manure management practices as outlined by the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA), the Right-to-Farm Act will protect you from nuisance lawsuits. This means that if your neighbor is offended by living next to horses and sues but you are following Michigan's manure management practices, it is unlikely that your case will make it to court, and even more unlikely that you will lose.

Many horse owners either don't know this or don't understand what it means, as the number of Right-to-Farm complaints MDA receives is increasing. The Michigan State University (MSU) Equine Area of Expertise Team and the MDA have worked together to develop a series of articles focusing on horse manure issues. They will cover water quality, zoning and management practices to help Michigan horse owners make the best decisions on manure management for their farms.

Traditionally, complaints lodged with the MDA have been against dairy, swine, beef and horse farms, in that order. Dairy farms have always had the highest percentage of complaints. In recent years, horse farm complaints rose from 8 to 16 percent, moving horse farm complaints from fourth in 2001 to second behind dairy in 2002. This is definitely not good news for the Michigan horse industry

Complaints against horse facilities range from concern about surface water and groundwater contamination, to air quality issues such as odors and flies.

#### **Impact on Horse Ownership**

It is very important that horse owners develop and implement plans for handling and disposing of manure. To avoid or ignore the issue may be a long-term recipe for disaster to the Michigan horse industry.

**Table 1. Number of Right-to-Farm equine complaints involving manure management.**

| YEAR                        | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Number of complaints</b> | 11   | 15   | 14   | 23   |

Complaints about horse manure could ultimately result in increased regulation of horse ownership at the township level. If enough complaints about equine properties are received, a township may rezone, which affects people's ability to keep horses. This will have the greatest impact on new and expanding horse operations. Existing farms will maintain their current protection under the Right-to-Farm Act. Regardless of township ordinances, it is best for the industry that all horse

owners strive to be good neighbors. Increased urban sprawl has resulted in more and more people living closer together. Boarding facilities generally cater to recreational riders and owners and are located near highly populated areas. These factors can result in increased complaints about odor, flies and/or the visual effect of manure piles.

**Environmental Impact**

Horse manure can be a beneficial land resource, but if it's poorly managed, it can have a negative impact on the environment. The phosphorus in manure is the primary concern. Soil needs phosphorus to be productive, but an overabundance can be detrimental to surface water quality if it runs off into surrounding ditches, streams and lakes.

Wood shavings in horse manure present another concern. Horse manure alone can provide a rich organic source of nitrogen to the soil, but wood shavings spread on a field can actually remove nitrogen from the soil. As a pasture or crop field becomes low in nitrogen, plant growth, quality and yield decrease while weed production increases.

Finally, air quality can be affected by the anaerobic breakdown of manure and ammonia from urine. Most horse owners don't consider horse manure odors offensive, but Murphy's Law ensures a strong wind blowing from your manure pile to your neighbor's backyard barbecue.

**Horse Health**

Equine health issues are inherent in the problem of manure management. Horses shed parasite ova (eggs) in their manure. Spreading raw manure on grazing land allows parasites to find their way back into different equine hosts and continue their life cycle.

A second health consideration comes from diseases spread via manure. Organisms that affect the horse's gastrointestinal tract (such as equine-specific *Salmonella*) can be passed in the feces. Other diseases that can contaminate the soil (such as *Rhodococcus* sp. and strangles or *Strep equi*) can be spread in a similar fashion.

**Conclusion**

Manure management is not simply a concern for livestock operations or large horse farms. Michigan's Right-to-Farm Act offers horse owners with guidelines for managing manure and protection if these guidelines are followed. Good manure management is a horse health issue, a water protection issue and a neighborhood harmony issue. Look for future articles on how you can better manage manure, improve your horse's health and be a good neighbor in the *One Horse or a Hundred* bulletin series. For more information on the Right-to-Farm Act, call 1-877-632-1783 or log onto <[www.michigan.gov/mda](http://www.michigan.gov/mda)>.



Taken from *One Horse or a Hundred* bulletin series, Michigan State University Equine Extension <http://www.canr.msu.edu/horseadults/>




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- Thanks to all who have new donkeys in their barn. We are deeply appreciative of all the new, and forever homes of our donkeys!




| <b>Adopter</b>        | <b>Donkey's Name</b>  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Nancy Garnes          | Jerry                 |
| Liz Knece             | Monty                 |
| Mark and Sylvia Olver | Winchester            |
| Lugthart Family       | Dave 213              |
| Alison Packzlowski    | Marty                 |
| Bob and Kathy Nauta   | Mr. Phips and Popcorn |
| Katie Ledergerber     | Jimmy                 |

- Do you have a desire to help and have some extra time?
  - Are you a great organizer with some extra time? There are always things to be done! Contact Sharon at [akaminiaturedonkeys@michcom.net](mailto:akaminiaturedonkeys@michcom.net)
- Donkeys available for adoption:
  - To see if your favorite donkey is still available for adoption, visit us at our website [www.turningpointedonkeyrescue.com](http://www.turningpointedonkeyrescue.com) or at [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com)

| Donkey name's   | Pertinent comments   |
|---|--|
| <p>Siegfried</p>   | <p>Siegfried, a handsome Standard donkey, is little more than a yearling. When his baby coat is shed, he will be very dark brown/black. This young man had been sent thru three different auction barns in two states in TWO MONTHS! He was peddled from sale to sale with his friend Hasta Luago a BLM gelding also now with us. Siegfried was gelded on June 5th. and is available now for adoption. He has an issue or two. Was scared to death at the very sight of our stock trailer. We teach every rescue donkey that comes to us how load into a trailer. Well, he had taken several trips before coming to us, (the sale barns you know) and he was having no part of loading up again. He put up a valiant fight during several loading lessons. Kicking at us, and kicking the trailer once inside. The poor lad is improving though. As we have all castrations done at the veterinary clinic instead of here on the farm (giving our donkeys an opportunity to load &amp; travel several times in one day) poor Siegfried had to load for his visit to the vet. He got in really very well. But as soon as the door closed behind him, the panic set in and he proceeded to kick the trailer. Luckily, his trip was a 15 minutes ride. He was a bit sweaty from worry, but none the worse for wear! He is a real fun guy to work with. Once he gets that it really isn't in his best interest to fight, he quickly adjusts his attitude. This boy will only be placed with someone that looks forward to investing their time, talents, and equine knowledge in this youngster. He is NOT aggressive, and not fearful of people either. It is all too clear to me that he has a history of being pushed around by a series of people that don't know anything about donkeys/horses. He ties up very well, and gets along well with his donkey buddies. As he is just a kid, he PLAYS all the time. It would be ideal to place him with another playful, somewhat busy equine. Siegfried and TPDR Jeffrey were recently moved to their new foster home with Brenda Moyer in Mason, Michigan. Siegfried and Jeffrey are becoming fast friends and Jeffrey especially has become devoted to Brenda's mom. Soon they will join the Big Boys (Brenda's Percherons) and her 3 TPDR adopted donkey boys to learn how to become acceptable members of a herd. The education process continues!!! If you are interested, please contact Brenda Moyer at 517-719-1370 or e-mail her at <a href="mailto:bmoyer@incorc.org">bmoyer@incorc.org</a> or contact Sharon Windsor at 517-623-0000 or email her at: <a href="mailto:akaminidonkeys@michcom.net">akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</a></p> |
| <p>Muggsy</p>  | <p>Muggsy, a handsome standard gelding, is a very stout, strong youngster only five years old. He came to us from a very caring woman in Michigan. She had one miniature yearling gelding and was searching for a companion for him. Also, she is the mom of two very young children. She came across an ad for Muggsy and was told he was indeed a mini. Of course when she arrived to see the donkey, she discovered that he sure was no little guy. The seller wanted him gone. Thus the deception over the telephone. This surely was not the donkey she was looking for and knew that he would not be the proper addition to her family. She also knew that she was NOT leaving him where he was! He had been kept in the basement of a barn all winter along with numerous other animals. When he was put outside he was tied up on a rope and given beer. Evidently his owner thought that was quite amusing. I have no idea how long he was with that individual. Muggsy was purchased by the kind woman that had come to get a mini, and within a few days came to our rescue. Muggsy gets along very well with other animals. He is reportedly very difficult for farrier work. He is due to be trimmed so we will evaluate that</p>  |

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|   | <p>issue soon. He loads easily. However, he is fearful when voices are raised when correcting his herd-mates and leaves the group as soon as possible. One can only imagine how he was treated prior to coming to us. He will respond very well when placed in a home where kindness and patience are the rule. He will make a fine companion for a horse, or even several horses. But please only someone that will treat him with the love, patience and respect he deserves. For more information, contact Sharon 517-623-0000 or email her at <a href="mailto:akaminidonkeys@michcom.net">akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</a></p>  |
| <p>Harlan</p>    | <p>Harlan, a handsome black miniature gelding, is just about as nice as they come! When found at a large auction sale, he was rather a forlorn sight to see. He was all alone in a pen way back in a dark corner. When approached, he immediately came forward to greet me. After a few minutes of looking him over and talking to him, I turned to leave and he had glued himself to my side! He looked up as if he fully expected me to get him out of there! Well, I told him I would, and I did!!! There were very few concerns with Harlan, and nothing that couldn't be easily put right. He was a bit thin, needed his hooves trimmed (not desperately) and had a pretty good case of lice. At home, I vaccinated and de-wormed him (he behaved perfectly) Several days later he had a visit with our farrier. Again he behaved perfectly. He has had several treatments for lice, and the cooties are now gone! He was just introduced to a group of 4 donkey geldings of various ages and sizes with no problem whatsoever. He is not a dominant donkey. He just moved in and took his place in the group. Harlan leads like a dream, anyone can walk up and halter him, he loads well, and is not at all either shy or pushy. A wonderful companion donkey suitable for adults and children as well. And a great companion for a nice horse too. For more information, contact Sharon 517-623-0000 or email her at <a href="mailto:akaminidonkeys@michcom.net">akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</a></p> |
| <p>Houdie</p>  | <p>Just how cute is he??? Houdie is just about as cute as a donkey can be and that is pretty cute! He and his mother were also auction donkeys. Both were in very good condition, and this guy's mom was really devoted to her baby. Well mom was sold one way and the kid came home with us. It was evident that the pair had come from someone that had cared very much for their donkeys. Mom and kid were very well fed, and their hooves had been taken care of as well. This standard baby showed me that he had lived with someone that knew donkeys and how to start a foal out the proper way. What a treat! Houdie knew how to lead, was a great guy for our farrier, and loaded well for his vet appointment for gelding. Our vet said "Wow, this is really a nice one, especially for such a young baby! I would think he is about six months old. He is WONDERFUL! It would be great to place Houdie with another young donkey so they can grow up together. He will need a playmate. He needs a home with someone that will continue to develop this great young guy. With his temperament, and willing calm nature he will be perfect for the person that wants to "Do Something" with their donkey! For more information, contact Sharon 517-623-0000 or email her at <a href="mailto:akaminidonkeys@michcom.net">akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</a></p>  |
| <p>Cooper</p>  | <p>Cooper will be two years old in mid August 2008. Yet another of many young unwanted jack donkeys routinely discarded at the sale barns. Coop is a handsome brown miniature with a very sweet nature. Prior to coming to TPDR, he evidently had his little tail broken, as it is quite short and crooked as well. The tail is fine, just a little odd looking. Coop doesn't care, and neither do we. Coop is keeping company with several other gelding donkeys and takes good care of himself at feeding time. He is non aggressive with his companions, but won't be bossed around either. I think he will make a great companion for either another donkey, or a lonely horse. He really likes people and is searching for someone of his very own to bond with. If you are interested please contact Sharon Windsor at 517-623-0000 or email her at: <a href="mailto:akaminidonkeys@michcom.net">akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</a></p>   |

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| <p>Owen</p>       | <p>Owen who was about 6-9 months old came to us from the exotic auction along with Stevie. Owen is a lovely gray miniature gelding. He has a little more self confidence than Stevie has, but keep in mind BOTH ARE BABIES, and likely other than coming to TPDR the only time they had left the security of their former home was to be taken to auction. Owen is a real sweetie that will flourish when he finally meets his forever family. Stevie and Owen will not be adopted as a pair. At this time, they are a bit too dependent upon one another. Understandably so!!! Once each boy finds his new family, they will then bond more with their people, and their new companion equines. Each will need a home with another donkey, mule, or horse. If you are interested in giving Owen a new home, please contact Sharon Windsor at 517-623-0000 or email her at: akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</p>   |
| <p>Stevie</p>     | <p>Stevie and his mother were taken to a large exotic animal auction along with another jennet and her foal. What a frightening experience for little guys that more than likely had never before left home. Yes, the sale barn is a noisy, chaotic place at best. People are constantly grabbing the donkeys, prying their mouths open to have a look at their teeth, then cranking their tails up to determine if the little animal is male or female. At least the babies had the comfort of their mothers. That was about to change. The two jennets were separated from their foals prior to entering the sale ring. The girls were sold as breeders so that next year there will be more unwanted foals to dump at yet another auction. We brought the little guys home with us. It has been almost a month of R&amp;R for them. Both Stevie and Owen (his friend also listed) were gelded on May 28. TPDR Stevie is about 5-7 months old, and will be quite a small mini at maturity. Stevie needs a home with only one or two other equines. He will benefit greatly by being placed with someone that believes in making FRIENDS with their donkey! For more information, contact Sharon at 517-623-0000 or email akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</p>  |
| <p>Jeffrey</p>  | <p>TPDR Jeffrey is four years old, a standard, and proving to be a great companion animal to be around. He really likes and trusts people, both adults and children as well. Jeffrey is well trained to lead, he trailers just fine, and has an outgoing, friendly disposition. He came to us from an auction, and fortunately I was able to get some information from his former owner. He had been kept as a pet, and also bred their jennet and produced a foal last year. As the family's life took on a new direction, both donkeys were sold at auction, with Jeffrey coming to us. After purchasing Jeffrey, he was left in Indiana with member Toby Lehman to be gelded and have his hooves trimmed. Ideally I would like to see this guy adopted by someone that would like to "Do Something Fun" with him. He is young, curious, and has a willing to please attitude that makes him very suitable to do therapy work, driving, showing, or even Parelli work! If you are interested contact Sharon Windsor at 517-623-0000 or email her at: akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</p>  |
| <p>Rudy</p>     | <p>Meet Rudy. This handsome fellow came to us last fall along with former herd mates Sparky, Ben, and Speedy G. The boys have been in rehab foster homes since their arrival. Rudy, foaled in 2002 is a very sweet gelding that is about 36 inches tall. He has a very passive and compliant nature. He leads very well, learned quickly to load and is a gentleman for picking up all four feet. Rudy along with his three half brothers all came to us as a result of the passing of their former owner. The original herd numbered about a dozen donkeys. The family has kept several of the senior herd members, and that left the four geldings in search of new homes. The boys had a very loving home and had received excellent veterinary and farrier care. They were all gelded at a young age, so no left over jack issues to deal with. The ONLY difficulty we have experienced with Rudy (AND THE OTHER THREE BOYS TOO) is they are very difficult to catch. The previous owners son told me that his dad went out each evening, sat with the donkeys and fed them a bag of carrots. The only time they were EVER CAUGHT was for the farrier and vet visits. They had ONE halter for the entire herd! Sweet little Rudy will be a wonderful pet for someone willing to work on his CATCHING KINK! After all, he did learn early on NOT to be caught when he was chased. I have met many donkeys in my life, BUT NEVER ONE THAT A HUMAN COULD OUTFRIN!!! Things work much better when you teach your donkey to come to you! If Interested contact Toni Jones at boyzbulldogs@yahoo.com or contact Sharon Windsor at 517-623-0000 or email her at: akaminidonkeys</p> |

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| <p>Ben</p>        | <p>Ben is almost 6 years old and spent a few months in our rehab center, before being moved to his foster home at Jackie Timmerman's. **Update from Ben's Foster Mom: 03-14-08** Ben has come along way since arriving at my house. He was great for the farrier. In fact he was the best one of all 4 including my own donkey. He stood there with his head on my arm and didn't mind at all. He leads well but still has to check out anything new since he has not been out of the pasture on any adventures yet. He is timid and shy but can be talked out of that with a few carrots. He is so careful about taking a carrot. We call him Gentle Ben. After a couple of times of giving, him carrots he is now the first one at the gate waiting for carrots. He is also the first one at the gate in the morning to greet me! If you are interested contact Jackie Timmerman at <a href="mailto:JTimmerman@hastingsmi.org">JTimmerman@hastingsmi.org</a></p> |
| <p>Sparky</p>     | <p>Sparky is almost 5 years old and spent a few months in our rehab center, before being moved to his foster home at Jackie Timmerman's. Jackie says: Sparky is the sweetest little guy. He loves to be brushed. After being brushed he won't leave my side. He still needs some work on leading. He will follow when one of the others are being lead. He was great for the farrier except for 1 front foot. The farrier thought that foot may have been injured in the past. He comes right up to me when I go in the pasture. He gets along with all of the donkeys. If you are interested contact Jackie Timmerman at <a href="mailto:JTimmerman@hastingsmi.org">JTimmerman@hastingsmi.org</a></p>   |
| <p>Speedy G</p>  | <p>Although I don't have a long write-up, I'm coming along nicely since arriving at TPDR. Speedy came last fall along with former herd mates Sparky, Ben, and Rudy. The boys have been in rehab foster homes since their arrival See Rudy for our story! If you are interested in providing a "forever home" contact Sharon Windsor at 517-623-0000 or email her at: <a href="mailto:akaminidonkeys@michcom.net">akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</a></p>  |

- **Green Hints for you, your donkey and the environment!**
- Do you have "hints" that made your life, your donkey's life and the environment better? Please share your ideas or articles? Email your hints/articles to [marteniucvm@msu.edu](mailto:marteniu@cvm.msu.edu)
  - Limit your use of herbicides and pesticides to only what is absolutely necessary on your farm.
    - When applying these products, always use caution, read the labels carefully, and follow the manufacturers directions. Careful use will not only protect your donkeys, but the wildlife in your area, as well.
    - If at all possible, use alternative control measures. Poultry to help control insects. Other livestock (sheep, goats, llamas) to control plants that your equid does not eat. Plants around electric fence lines may be controlled by using your string trimmer just as you would around your house.
  - Select annual flowers that not only complement your landscape, but attract butterflies and hummingbirds. Your local nursery will be able to help in plant selection and care.
  - Now is the time to make arrangements for this winter's hay supply. Not only will you save money on the cost of the hay, but you will save time and fuel as you will not be trying to find and haul hay when the weather is "less than desirable" for traveling.