



Christmas Eve Past

Christmas Eve has always been an important time for me. I love going to the barn late in the evening to enjoy the peace and to give a prayer of thanksgiving.

There have been some like no other days. One of the major surprises Christmas Eve started on a cold misty damp night where the cold goes right through your clothes. The two cats were sitting side by side up in the hayloft with a look on their faces that **said, "It's about time you got here."**

There was a high screeching sound like a small animal caught in a trap, and it was impossible to tell where the sound was coming from. I checked the hayloft to no avail. As I was coming down Tundra, our livestock guard dog, appeared out of the shadows mouthing a small animal. This was not where the screeching noise was coming from. Tundra willingly let me stroke her for the first time since she arrived at the rescue at eight months old.

I took the animal from Tundra and rapped it in my sweatshirt, and it was so cold. **I found the squealing critter buried in Tundra's huge hay pile. It was a freezing cold newborn puppy.** I told Tundra she had to come with me and I would help her. (Up until that night, we could not have dragged her into the house.) Surprise, we had **been told that she had been spayed...WRONG. One of many lies. (She was two years old when this took place.)**

I was beginning to panic. I didn't know anything about whelping puppies. I thought I could call our vet....no it is Christmas Eve, can't do that. Tundra was now on a quilt in the office and I was trying to warm both puppies. The one Tundra was mouthing had been buried and needed to be washed and its nose and mouth cleared. I had the other one wrapped in a towel on a heating pad. *(Cont. on Page 2)*



The old log barn housed many horse for lots of years.



Tundra

Christmas Eve Past (Cont. from Pg. 1)

“I needed help! I’ll call Sue Wortman, she knows dogs. “Sue what are you doing?” And she said, “I have company.” “Get rid of them, Tundra’s having puppies,” and I hung up. “I’ll call Roberta McCardle, she knows dogs. “Roberta, what are you doing?” “I just came in from church.” “Get here fast, Tundra is having puppies!” and I hung up. Do you think I was a little panicky?

Tundra was responding surprisingly well to each thing that I asked her. “Be gentle with the babies.” Sue and Roberta arrived in record time. Roberta took the baby Tundra was mouthing to the emergency vet, but the pup didn’t survive. Sue helped with the pups and got them nursing. While I encouraged Tundra as she delivered each new baby.

The three of us were in awe of two-year-old Tundra allowing us to help her, clean her and touch and handle her puppies. For the next five weeks, the three of us were the only three people Tundra would allow with her and her puppies.

The adventure continued as Sue and I would load the pups in cat carriers and put the whole family into her van to go to the vet office. Tundra was not going to let anyone in the waiting room look at her babies. We had to set it up so we could take the bunch right to an exam room. By five weeks old the pups would not fit in a normal **size cat carrier. It was time to move the family outside. To everyone’s surprise, Tundra would gently push in when anyone was playing with the pups.**

Tundra was wandering around acting a little lost since all her puppies had left by nine weeks old. I put a lead on her and walked her down to her favorite small herd of **horses. She started to follow me back and I told her “No, you need to take care of the horses now.” And that was it! She no longer wanted to be friends with any of us.**

It was embarrassing since we are a rescue and our dog had puppies! I have to believe God has a sense of humor. Out of all the days in a year, the puppies were born on Christmas Eve. . . Surprise!! It turned out to be a wonderful present that we all enjoyed. **Thank you, God, for another special Christmas Eve.**



Christmas Day, Years Ago

Comanche had been a champion Saddlebred for many years in California. He was advertised in his younger days for \$75,000.00. This was an extremely high price at that time.

Comanche was sold to a crooked politician in SC that was sent to prison. The horse was given to a family here in NC. They had five young children, and no one in the family knew how to ride or anything about horses.

The family lost interest in Comanche and he was left in a field with cows. A young friend of mine was asked to take the old skinny horse to the auction. He didn't want to do this and stopped at his parent's home for lunch. His parents said they would take him and he could have all the grass in the field behind their home.

My friend thought, "Problem solved," until a couple of years later he saw the old boy once again. He couldn't believe that his parents let him get to be such a bag of bones. If anyone saw the horse, he knew Animal Control would be called. He got in touch with me and explained the circumstances and of course, we agreed to take the thirty-plus-year-old Saddlebred.

Comanche picked his name and had a long list of issues. He was in such poor condition that people were surprised he was still standing. Comanche's ulcers were so bad that he wouldn't eat.

When horses are alone they will often develop odd habits. I had never seen anything like Comanche's propensity. He would take a small nibble of grass and while watching himself in a glass window, he would blow long strings of green bubbles. He would dribble the bubbles down his chest and swing them around on his sides when the flies were worrying him.

We had to squirt Aloe Vera juice down Comanche's throat multiple times a day and finally, he slowly started to eat after three days. He didn't give up his hobby of blowing green bubbles.

Little by little Comanche started to gain weight. The flies were eating the hair off of his chest and sides. (This where the story takes a terrible turn.) The veterinarian that we were using at that time stopped by with a gallon of fly spray manufactured by Bayer Company for us to try. I asked if the chemical was safe and I was told it was safe to use.

I read the large pamphlet, with tiny print and the label. It also came with a spray bottle marked where the spray line and the water line on it. I put about 1/3 less chemical in the spray bottle than what was suggested and then fill the bottle with water. I lightly misted Comanche's chest and each side where the flies were eating the hair three times over the next ten days. Day ten Comanche had paralysis of the hind-quarter. It was dreadful to see the big horse struggling to stand, circling, and falling to the ground.

I called the vet and then called Bayer Company that manufactured the product named Co-Ral. The research scientist I spoke to said Atropine was the antidote and we determined the dose. Spoke with different scientists at Bayer and they were not helpful. (Cont. on Page 4)

Christmas Past (Cont. from Pg. 3)

One said, they did not work on the project but would look at it to see if they could help. She said, "Oh! This product was mislabeled and should only be used once every two weeks. The chemical is cumulative in the bloodstream."

I called the owner of the vet practice and he said, he would take care of it. He closed the office for a day and had all the fly spray he had given out o various stables picked up. Before the week was over, all of this product had been picked up across the country.

Comanche was a hero that saved horses' lives. The blood panel showed his liver and kidneys had been damaged. He quickly lost all the weight he had gained. It took three people each feeding to help Comanche be able to eat. His feed bowl was placed on a 50-gallon barrel and held in place by one person. Two other folks had to brace his hind-quarter on either side to help him stand.

All of this took place in August when the flies were terrible and it was so hot. Everyone's heart and prayers were for Comanche. So many people volunteered to help Comanche at mealtime. Each day he would improve a tiny bit so we knew we didn't have to put him to sleep.

I was exhausted! And left for a two-week vacation in Colorado over Christmas time. Valerie Berns was feeding the horses Christmas morning and in a slight panic call Judd Emerson, the HPS President. Judd said, "What's wrong Valerie?"

Valerie replied loudly, "Comanche is running and bucking." Our prayers were answered and it was so extra special since it was Christmas Day.

Comanche's health never fully recovered, but he was happy and full of life. His job was to guard Angle and Snickers. He took his job very seriously.

Angel made friends with every new starved horse. She like to sneak in and share their meals. Comanche was gaining his weight and doing great until the fly spray that poisoned him so seriously.



The sanctuary has had so many miracles and lessons to be learned.

Your donations make miracles possible here. As with Comanche, thousands were saved. The discovery of the cure for Moon Blindness or as it is known, Recurrent Uveitis. God gives us the wisdom, You give us the ability to spread the information.

Sometimes we just don't know what to do!



Sometimes we get a note from a contributor explaining why they can no longer donate. Our hearts and prayers are with them. The slower economy is bound to hurt the level of donations.

*HPS still has calendars to sell and that make nice gifts. We will happily mail the calendar and include a note if you will send it to us or let us know what you would like the message to read. **Thank you for caring!***

Merry Christmas to Glenda Liles Thompson. By Ann & Benjy Seagle

In loving memory of my sister, Nancy Nelson Kirkner who lived in Little River, SC. H. Phillip Nelson

In honor of Jodi Douthit and Dottie Rebhan's December birthdays. By Sybil Athey

In Memory of our beloved Westie, Scooter, who passed away Nov. 1, 2020. Forever in our hearts.

By Trisha Scudder

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