

# Finding My Inspiration: Why I Foster for the LRF

By Lauren Self, LRF Secretary

For the longest time, I never considered being a foster. It wasn't because I couldn't foster, or didn't have the skill and knowledge to do so, but the thought just never crossed my mind. It was not until there was an actual "need" for a foster in my area that I began considering the possibility.

Volunteering my time for the Lipizzan Rescue Foundation since approximately 2011 has been very fulfilling to me. Becoming a foster for the LRF was an easy layer to add on top of "just donating my time" as a volunteer.

It was in May of 2015 when I saw the first pictures of what was going to be my foster horse: he was beautifully handsome, and his spirit shone through the knee-deep muck and despair surrounding him. My future foster, Nick, was standing in a US-to-Mexico Processing facility, awaiting his fate. He is one of the few horses purchased from a kill pen by the LRF.

Nick's photos were quickly circulated through the board, and because he showed enough potential to be part Lipizzan, his ransom was paid and he was safe! That was only the first step in Nick's long journey to his now forever home with LRF adopter, Debbie Popolizio, where he is living his best life!

Because Nick was in Texas, and the kill pen was about 2 hours away from me, Lyn Schaeffer, LRF President, asked me if I'd consider fostering him. "ABSOLUTELY I will!" was my immediate reply. I hadn't cleared this fostering position with my family yet, but I often defer to the mantra of, "It's better to beg for forgiveness than to ask permission" (wink, wink). A few days later, Nick was with me in his quarantine pasture, and the toll of the auction system and his time spent in the kill pens left sweet Nick a very sick boy. His shining spirit and a heart of gold, (along with antibiotics, worming, and vaccines) healed him quickly from the inside out. I gathered DNA samples and off they went for review. It was determined that Nick was most likely an Andalusian pony cross. So he was a Lipizzan cousin - and deserving all the same!

Fostering Nick was a wonderful experience for my family and I. The love he received from us was matched ten



**BEFORE: Nick, awaiting his fate.**

times over by the love that he gave back. His gratefulness just radiated from him.

He "shined up like a silver dollar" and after his quarantine he immediately fit right in with our herd. It was a joy to learn about him and determine what he may or may not already know, regarding training. This was my first experience with a horse that had ZERO history. I soon learned he groomed and bathed well, which was a good thing because I had to take literally everything but the kitchen sink to his tail to untangle it. He was so polite and gentle with haltering and leading, so we knew he had been treated well in the past. Someone had really loved him once!

This was a tough pill for me to swallow as I wanted to know WHY. How on Earth did this amazingly precious pony end up hours from boarding a slaughter truck headed to Mexico? Did his people know? Surely not! Was he a little girl's best friend that she outgrew? Did he have elderly owners that passed away? Was he an unfortunate liquidation of assets from a divorce? We will never know. But what was eventually discovered, by his new momma, is that Nick is a well-trained carriage pony! Who would have guessed?! And because his mom loves to drive, Nick is back to doing what he was meant to do all along and bringing joy to all who meet him along the way.

Putting my heart, soul, love, time, and energy into months of rehabilitation with Nick was a labor of love I wouldn't trade for anything. Fostering was an all-around fantastic gift to us both. And I'm not going to lie.....Putting him in the trailer to his forever momma was completely heartbreaking for me. But I'd do it again in a heartbeat, because seeing him thrive in a home that loves him as much as I do makes that process of setting him free much easier. I am now on my fifth foster horse for the LRF and still enjoy it just the same.

Fostering is a very integral and important part of the LRF, and additional foster homes are always needed and very much appreciated. Please consider filling out a foster application with us. It can be found on our website, [www.LipizzanRescueFoundation.org](http://www.LipizzanRescueFoundation.org).



**AFTER: A very happy Nick in his new home with Debbie Popolizio**



## Lipizzan Rescue Foundation

*Breed preservation and providing aid to individual horses.*



### Help the LRF to be Awarded Rescue of the Year!

The LRF has a wonderful opportunity to earn a \$1000 dollar award, but we need your help!

⇒ The Equis Safe Foundation provides a “Rescue of the Year Award” to an eligible organization, and public nominations must be received by May 1. ←

***Please nominate the LRF at the following link:***

**<https://equissavefoundation.org/rescue-of-the-year-nomination-form/>**

**Please include the following information where requested when completing the nomination:**

Name of Organization: **Lipizzan Rescue Foundation**

Email of Rescue: **SaveOurLips@gmail.com**

Website of Rescue: **<https://lipizzanrescuefoundation.org/>**

Contact at Rescue: **Lyn Schaeffer**

Address of Rescue: **8480 O'Hare Rd., Las Vegas, NV 89143**

Phone Number of Rescue: **1-800-991-0952**

The LRF is a 501(C)3

We will announce in early May whether we've been selected as a finalist for the award.

Please take a few minutes out of your day to help promote the LRF  
by submitting a heartfelt nomination.

