

What Rescue Did for Me...

Katie Langdale

Rescue has always been near and dear to my heart.

Most of my herd, which is not solely Lipizzans, has been procured by some sort of "rescue." Since my introduction into the Lipizzan community eight years ago, I have been baffled by how many "Imperial Whites" were literally abandoned, neglected, or abused.

As a horse-crazed child, I would often daydream of riding a white steed with a red saddle cloth in front of thousands of people in an enclosed indoor arena. My movements were minute, yet definite. The stallion of my dreams softly danced to a classical music arrangement, before plunging into one of the Airs Above the Ground movements. Little did I know that my dreams would become my future!

Schoolmasters that had traveled the world doing solo and quadrille performances allowed me the feeling of piaffe and passage for the first time. I smiled every time we strutted across the ring in Spanish Walk. My beloved Andalusian stallion knew so many tricks and high school movements and was a blast to ride.

Another schoolmaster that I owned, a Lipizzan, was the king of leg yields and side passing. We could zig zag and do tempi changes with the best of them! We rode in horse shows, theatre performances, expos, demos, photo shoots, and even did commercial film work!

To say I was spoiled is a huge understatement. It was an absolute privilege to ride these teachers, experiencing first-hand their amazing talents.

Many people discount senior horses, focusing on their age rather than their knowledge. I look at senior horses like grandparents. They have been through the trenches. There is something comforting about an older person and most definitely about an older horse.

Most recently, I have been focusing much of my energy on reproduction and trying to help preserve the Lipizzan breed in the United States. I have been selective as to the mares that are brought into my herd. I'm primarily focusing on quality not quantity, though my feed bill suggests otherwise.



Pictured: Castellana, LRF Alum

Two years ago, I was contacted by the Lipizzan Rescue Foundation (LRF) about possibly adopting a small unbacked 13-year-old mare they needed to rehome. Generally, I like larger horses for both riding and breeding, but this little mare was special right from the start! Aside from being beautiful and having "top shelf" movement, she was so sweet! We bred her to my friend's rare bloodline imported stallion, 7021 Neapolitano XI-21, "Ike." The resulting foal is a fluffy grey lovable teddy bear that has tons of personality and is obnoxiously friendly! The plan is to back the dam this winter and eventually turn her into my daughter's mount. I have no doubt she will be an asset to both our breeding program and a trusty steed for Lara!

I tell all my friends about the LRF. It is a wonderful organization that really goes above and beyond to help our special four-legged friends. I would urge anyone considering adding a Lipizzan to their herd to call and speak with one of their enthusiastic, caring volunteers. Tell them what you are looking for and ask what is available. Be open to suggestions but be realistic with expectations. There are very few valid reasons why Lipizzans should end up in a rescue situation, yet so many do. And please don't discount the seniors! Between the USLF and LRF communities, there is truly something out there for everyone!

Satori Lisa Gurian

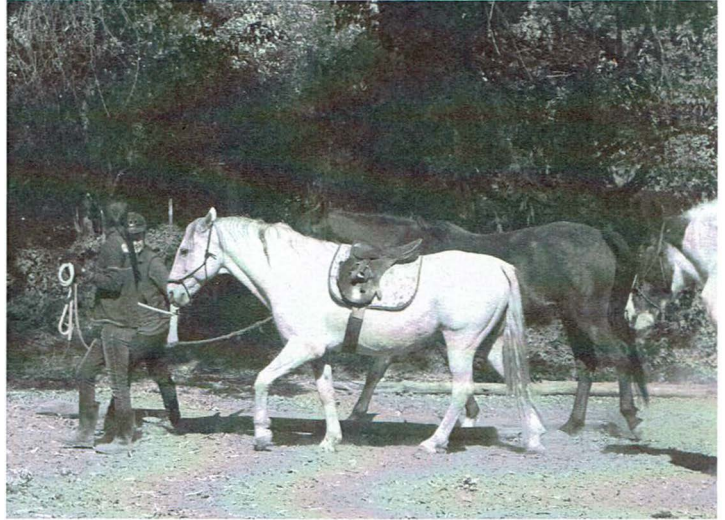


Photo Credits: Eric Messick "I am in the photos and my friend Naya is helping."

Satori (Favory Fantasia III-II) has been with me for about two months. He came to me via the Lipizzan Rescue Foundation. He had never been backed and had no formal training. He is 15 years old. I have been using my Arabian mare and Shire Gypsy gelding as helper horses. I have now walked him around with a saddle and sat on his back bareback a few times. He is so curious and into everything!

I call him my tester horse. I use a method of training based on "When Horses Choose" which is communications and negotiations. Our journey is just beginning and I am loving the challenge.

