

## The issue of horse slaughter

An article from Down The Stretch

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So I publish this horse racing newspaper - Down The Stretch, Canada's most entertaining and informative racing newspaper - and I was thinking from the beginning that we would cover the races and players with passion and humour, but guess what one thing seems to be attracting us the most attention? It's the issue of horse slaughter. Sadly, hundreds, maybe thousands of horses that used to run in Canadian parimutuel races, find themselves on the treadmill to slaughter because of a huge demand - especially in Europe and Asia - for horse meat. It's expensive to own a racehorse and sometimes, when a horse can no longer earn anything on the track, its owner is faced with a difficult decision.

Thanks to people like Alex Brown, the relentless soldier at the front of the anti-slaughter movement in the United States, laws were created that make it illegal in the States to kill a thoroughbred in this manner, or to even participate in the transport of a former racer to a slaughterhouse. There is a growing constituency in Canada that wants similar legislation here. A brave young woman by the name of Yael Gottesman is a vibrant and irresistible one-woman band against horse slaughter in Canada. She has spent months collecting names on a petition and will soon be rewarded for her persistence. After several requests, Peter Kent, the Federal Member of Parliament for her riding, has agreed to meet with her. That meeting is scheduled for April 7. In Canada, the chances of a private member's bill ever becoming a reality is minimal, to be optimistic, but Yael's confrontation with a sitting member is one of many strategies that could lead to laws against this hideous practise.

In our own modest way, Down The Stretch will support the efforts of horse rescue and anti-horse slaughter activity. We will continue to run stories that speak to this topic and beginning with our latest issue - on line now at [www.downthestretchnewspaper.com](http://www.downthestretchnewspaper.com), we will run the purple ribbon that is emblematic of horse rescue. You can find the purple ribbon on top of the editor's comment on page 3.

And while we're blogging about Down The Stretch, please allow me to strut a bit here. This is our 17th issue and it's a good one. I think the cover is the most exciting and attractive yet. I'm learning that exciting words on the cover of a paper can often be more effective than a great picture. Inside this issue is a lot of great material. Perry Lefko has the definitive take on Frank Stronach's dramatic race track collapse. Stronach has poured about \$750 million into ownership of many racetracks in the United States, but recently, Magna Entertainment filed for chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. Simply put, Frank has run out of money to run his equine money pits. We also have a very attractive two page spread on the un-Stronachs, the relatively unknown exercise riders who work the horses in mornings when the temperatures were often in the -20 windchill department. We've got a complete analysis of what everyone involved is calling the worst accident in harness racing at Woodbine, a feature on trainer Ian Black, victories at several U.S. racetracks by Canadians, regular columns from Louis Cauz and humourist Bob Carson and, for the first time, Perry and Mooch, our unique cartoon characters, go satirical. Also, with all the discussion that we're involved with regarding man's cruelty to horses, you can read in Oddities and Entities, a tale of one horse's cruelty to one man - i.e. me.

What colour ribbon do you think would be best to represent the cause of better treatment of reporters' arms against uninhibited colts?