



President's Ponderings

HELLO HEAVY LOVERS AND WELCOME TO

January!

Happy New Year, everyone!

I hope you all had a wonderful, relaxing Christmas filled with joy and perhaps a few extra carrots for the four-legged friends in your lives. As we settle into the first few weeks of the year, I've been reflecting on the incredible community that surrounds Heavy Horse Heaven. Your support is our heartbeat, and we are so grateful to have you with us.

Looking ahead, 2026 promises to be just as exciting for the Hoofbeat Herald. We are committed to bringing you even more valuable content, from in-depth articles on heavy horse health and rehabilitation to fun facts about the history and heritage of these magnificent gentle giants.

Our goal is to make this newsletter a go-to resource for anyone who loves BIG horses as much as we do, so Clyde is building an index. Watch this space.

We Want to Hear From You!

This community is built on shared passion, and we know many of you have incredible experiences to share. Whether it's a heartwarming story about a rescue, a milestone in your horse's training, or simply a beautiful moment in the paddock, we invite you to share your stories with us. Your contributions can help make this newsletter a true reflection of our HHH family.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to our mission. Let's make this year the best one yet for the horses we love.

Kazz.

RESCUE ROUNDUP (INS AND OUTS)

STAR – A JOURNEY OF CARE, COMFORT, AND LOVE

When Star first arrived at HHH in April 2024 with her foal Bobbie at foot, it was clear she had been struggling for a long time. Her teeth were in a painful state, and several needed to be removed to give her relief. With no enamel on her back teeth, she couldn't properly chew hay or dry grass, making it difficult for her to maintain weight or get the nutrition she desperately needed.

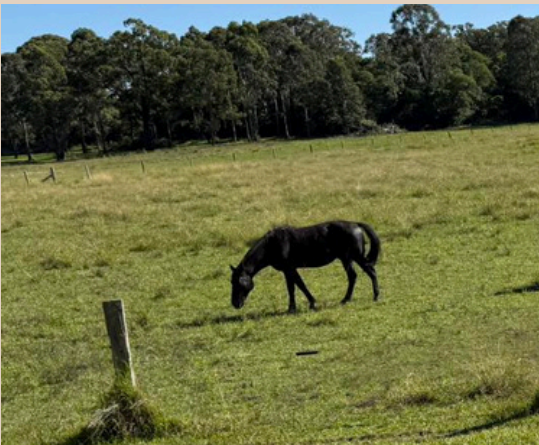


As Bobbie grew, it became time to gently wean him so Star could begin her own recovery. Both handled the transition beautifully. Star seemed relieved to enjoy peaceful meals, a warm rug, and the chance to eat without discomfort. Bobbie adjusted well too, with Auntie Luna stepping in to offer companionship whenever he needed reassurance.



RESCUE ROUNDUP (INS AND OUTS)

We are deeply grateful to our wonderful HHH family member Chrissy, who opened her home and heart to foster Star over winter. With soft, lush grass unavailable during the drought at HHH HQ, Chrissy's paddocks provided exactly what Star needed—gentle, easy-to-eat forage that didn't strain her damaged teeth. Chrissy and Greg cared for Star with incredible dedication for nine months, giving her comfort, dignity, and love.



Despite everyone's best efforts, Star's long-standing dental issues had caused irreversible damage. On 12 December 2025, our beautiful girl crossed the rainbow bridge. She left this world peacefully, surrounded by care, thanks to the compassionate support of Boyne Equine Health – Sinead McCann, who helped prepare her for her final journey.

Star's time with us was filled with kindness, gentleness, and the chance to finally experience comfort. We will always honour her memory by ensuring her boy, Bobbie, continues to be loved, supported, and cherished—just as she deserved.

Fly high, sweet Star. You were ready, but we will miss you.



Spotlight on Ozzy

The Story So Far:

Ozzy has been part of the HHH herd for just over a year, and throughout that time he has shown incredible resilience. When he first arrived, he required extensive chiropractic work, bodywork, and ongoing hoof care to help him settle into a healthier, more comfortable life.

As time went on, Ozzy was diagnosed with a twisted pelvis, which meant his activity had to be carefully managed to prevent further strain. Unfortunately, his hoof issues continued to worsen, and he was eventually diagnosed with canker – a rare and difficult condition to treat in Australia.

Alongside this, he also developed coronitis, an inflammation affecting all four coronet bands. Although an autoimmune disorder was suspected, his bloodwork did not confirm it.

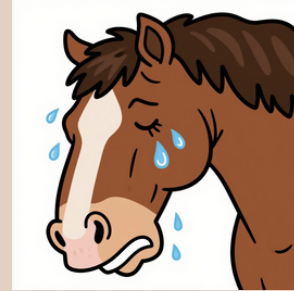
Ozzy was taken under the care of Dr. Heidi at Borambola Valley Veterinary Podiatry Centre, who went above and beyond by researching internationally and creating a targeted treatment plan. His care included antibiotics and a custom compound powder applied directly to the affected areas. Dr. Heidi also performed light debridement to remove damaged tissue and support healing. Thanks to her dedication, Ozzy began to show promising signs of improvement, and the team shifted focus to monitoring his coronitis as the canker appeared to resolve.

Latest Update:

We're thrilled to share that Dr. Heidi has successfully resolved both Ozzy's canker and his coronitis. While we'll continue to keep a close eye on him in case anything returns, Ozzy is feeling so much better. He's back to his sweet, gentle self – playing with the boys, grazing happily, and enjoying life again.



Beating the Aussie Heat



As the Australian sun settles in for the season, some parts of our wide land will see some pretty high temps and our heavy horses face unique challenges. Because of their sheer size—often weighing over 800kg—they have a much lower surface-area-to-mass ratio than smaller breeds. In simple terms: they heat up quickly but take a long time to cool down.

At Heavy Horse Heaven, we prioritise "Summer Safety" to ensure our gentle giants stay comfortable when the mercury rises. Here is a guide to managing your big fellas this season:

Hydration & Heat Stress

The "Pinch Test" & Beyond: Checking the skin on the neck is a great start, but also check their gums. They should be bubble-gum pink and moist. If they feel tacky or look pale, your horse is likely dehydrated. Ensure troughs are clean; heavy horses can be surprisingly picky and will drink less if the water is stagnant or contains algae.

Electrolyte Support: Large horses lose a significant amount of salt through sweat—you'll often see it as a white crust on their coats. Adding a high-quality electrolyte to a wet "soup" feed in the evening helps replace these minerals and encourages them to drink more.



Beating the Aussie Heat - continued

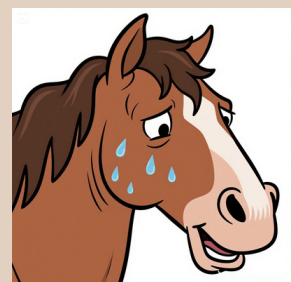
The Golden Hours: In our Australian summer, the "Danger Zone" is usually between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM. If the temperature exceeds 30°C, minimise all physical exertion. If you must move them, do it early in the morning.

Sunburn Alert: Those beautiful white blazes and pink muzzles are highly susceptible to photosensitivity and painful sunburn. Apply a thick layer of horse-safe zinc or human-grade (unscented) 50+ sunscreen daily. For horses that rub the cream off, a UV-rated fly mask with a long nose piece is a lifesaver.

Recognising Anhidrosis (The "Puffing" Syndrome)

Keep a close eye on your horse's breathing. Some heavy horses in Australia can suffer from anhidrosis—the inability to sweat properly. If you notice your horse is "puffing" (laboured, rapid breathing) while standing still in the shade, and their skin feels hot and dry rather than sweaty, they are at high risk of heatstroke.

Cooling Tip: If a horse is overheating, the fastest way to drop their core temperature is to apply cool water to the areas with large blood vessels (the neck, chest, and inside the hind legs) and scrape the water off immediately. Leaving the water on can actually create a "sauna" effect in their thick coats!





DID YOU KNOW

What on Earth Is a “Bean”? (And No, It’s Not the Baked Kind!)

If you follow the HHH Facebook page, you may have seen us mention that when the “nice tooth lady” visits, she sometimes also removes something called a bean. This often raises a few eyebrows – and fair enough! It sounds like something you’d find in a lunchbox, not on a horse.

Rest assured, it has nothing to do with the beans we eat. In equine care, a “bean” is the common name for a hardened buildup of smegma found inside the sheath or at the tip of the penis in male horses (geldings and stallions).

What Exactly Is a Bean?

What it’s made of: A bean is a little lump made of smegma (a natural waxy secretion), dead skin cells, oil, dirt, and urine residue.

Where it forms: It usually develops in a small pocket called the urethral fossa, located right at the tip of the penis next to the urethral opening.

How big it can get: Beans can be tiny... or grow as large as a lima bean, walnut, or even a golf ball in severe cases.

Why Does It Matter?

A bean might be small, but it can cause big discomfort.

Pain & irritation: Imagine walking around with a pebble in your shoe – that’s what it can feel like for a horse.

Urination problems: A large bean can partially block the urethra, making urination painful or causing the urine stream to spray oddly. In very rare cases, a complete blockage can be life-threatening.

Behaviour changes: Horses with a bean may rub their tails, kick at their sheath, or act uncomfortable under saddle.

How Are Beans Removed?

The solution is simple: sheath cleaning.

What happens: A vet or experienced handler gently cleans the sheath and removes any built-up smegma, including the bean.

How often: Geldings often need this done once or twice a year because they don't fully drop their penis as often as stallions, allowing build-up to accumulate.

Safety first: Because the area is sensitive, some horses may need mild sedation to keep everyone safe and comfortable.

Do Mares Get Beans?

Much less commonly – but yes, mares can develop similar debris around their teats or in the folds of the vulva. These are sometimes informally called “beans” too.

Dr Emma at Mainprize Veterinary Services has recorded a video which shows a bean removal. It is definitely worth viewing if you are interested. You will find it on her FaceBook page <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100051288377619>

Reader Puzzle

Here are some interesting facts about horses, covering their biology, senses, and behaviour. Some of these statements are **TRUE**. Which statements are **FALSE**?

Horses can't vomit.

Horses cannot breathe through their mouths – they can only breathe through their nose.

Horses can sleep standing Up

Horses have the largest eyes of any land mammal.

Horses have near 360-Degree Vision.

Horses have two blind spots: one directly in front of their nose and one directly behind their tail.

Horses have excellent hearing.

Horses have two left feet.

Horses can read human facial expressions and even remember a person's emotional state, adjusting their behaviour accordingly.

Foals can stand up within a couple of hours and run within a day of being born.

Horses are highly social herd animals.

The average gallop is about 44 kph. The fastest recorded speed for a horse in a sprint was around 89 kph.

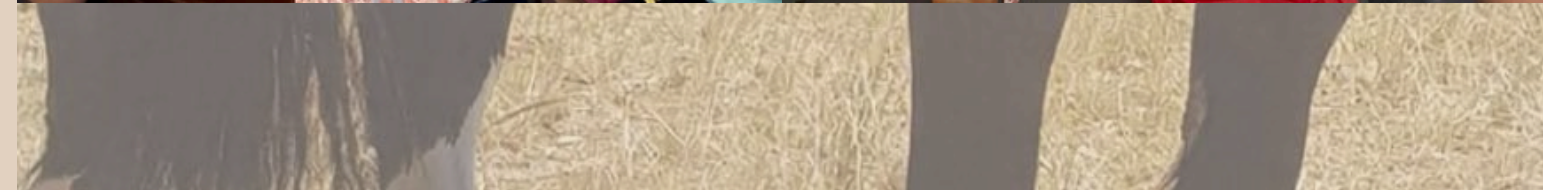
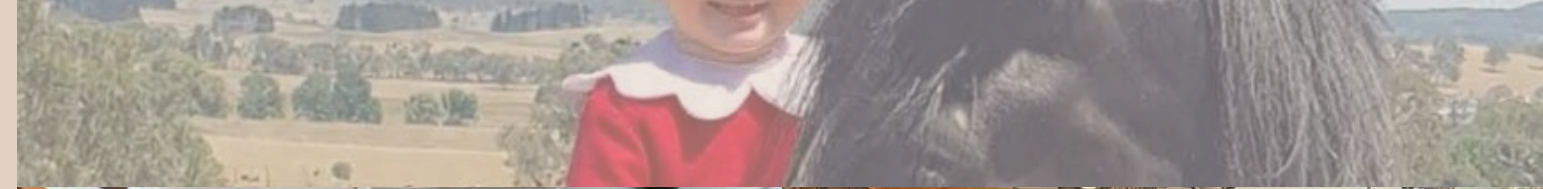
The average lifespan for a domestic horse is 25 to 30 years



LAST MONTH'S READER PUZZLE SOLUTION

Solution to the logic puzzle "The Mystery of the Stables"

Stable	Horse	Color	Treat	Activity
1	Willow	Chestnut	Carrots	Racing
2	Blaze	White	Sugar Cubes	Jumping
3	Echo	Grey	Oats	Trotting
4	Storm	Black	Apples	Grazing



Q and A topic for this month. Nope. Sadly again none received. BUT if you have anything for February, please email to the below by:

Thursday Januuary 29th 2026 via newsletter@heavyhorseheaven.com.au