

May Racing Carnival again has blood on its hands

With the death of yet another racehorse from the W'bool May Racing Carnival, how on earth can we support jumps racing?

All smiles: Dan Tehan's friends in racing

MP Dan Tehan is a big fan of racing, but more than that, he owns shares in a racehorse with WRC chairman Nick Rule.

10 good reasons why we must say no to horses and dogs



By Carol Altmann

Why horses and dogs don't belong in the conservation and conservation/recreation zones that will stretch from Killarney Beach to Warrnambool:

1. At least 54 species of "conservation significance" live there, including five listed as critically endangered, particularly the Orange Bellied Parrot, 10 listed as endangered, 20 as vulnerable, and 16 listed as threatened. (draft report p86-87)
2. There WILL be a negative impact on these species. Not "perhaps" or "maybe": there WILL be a negative impact that reduces their chances of thriving or even surviving. (p29, p33, p34-35)
3. The traditional owners of this country have made it very clear that they do not support racehorse training in the reserve. (p22, p64)
4. Racehorse training at Levy's Beach WILL cause damage to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in this area and any artefacts will have to be removed and stored before it begins*. (p64)

5. Horse training WILL cause erosion**. Not perhaps or maybe: it WILL.

6. Every coastal plan for this area in the past 40 years has emphasised the need for MORE protection, not less. This includes the W'Bool City Council's own Warrnambool Coastal Management Plan, signed off just four years ago.

7. It ignores the Land Conservation Council framework set down for this area in 1978, knowing it would come under increased pressures. As a result of the LCC, the majority of public land in the area was officially set aside in 1979 as a conservation reserve. The LCC emphasises low-impact recreation, conservation and protection. (p83)

8. There are no numbers on exactly how many racehorses would use the most sensitive areas of Levy's Point, Golfies and Rutledge's Cutting. (p63-64)

9. Monitoring this area is already difficult because of its isolation.

The area already suffers erosion and damage caused by illegal activities. (p61)

How will the WCC, Vic Police and Parks Vic have the time and resources to monitor it in the future?

10. The bottom line? Commercial racehorse training is not recreation and it is not conservation. This is not anti-horseracing, it is just fact.

Please have your say on the draft management plan for Belfast Coastal Reserve, by March 16, here: www.engage.vic.gov.au/belfast

* The full extent of Indigenous artefacts and cultural sites in this area is not known due to either out-dated or insufficient data. The plan says more studies need to be done.

** There also needs to be more studies into the full impact of

horses on beaches, but two referred to in the draft report (p80-81) confirm that horses cause erosion. Here is part of the summary from a 2001 study of horse riding in D'Entrecasteaux National Park, WA:

"Horse riding altered plant species composition, increased the area of bare ground and decreased height and cover of vegetation. Significant impacts occurred after only low levels of horse use. The findings indicate the need for a database on horse riding impact in Australia so that, where horse riding is allowed, impacts can be properly assessed and effectively managed."

<http://www.publish.csiro.au/pc/PC020256>

For the love of horses



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[/dropcap]helping animals in distress is one of the noblest things us flawed humans can do.

While most of us are familiar with the good work of the [RSPCA](#), [Animals Australia](#) and [Wildlife Victoria](#), there is also a large number of individuals doing their bit by rescuing injured or neglected animals, saving broken birds, fighting to protect native habitat, or rehoming a former family pet.

Bluestone Magazine has found two such people in **Emma McLean** and **Matt Hee**, both of Allansford, who save unwanted or neglected horses.

Emma, followed more recently by Matt, is the south-west Victorian representative for **Second Venture Horse Rescue**, a new and still relatively unknown not-for-profit group that covers most of Victoria and into NSW.

Second Venture, as it sounds, aims to give old, injured, neglected or surrendered horses a second chance at life.



Happy horse in a new home: Floss tries out the

territory at Emma's property.

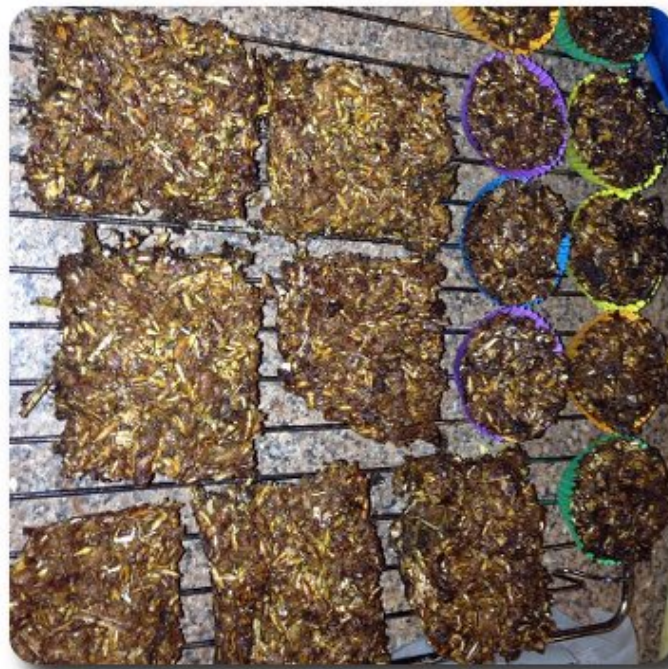
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[/dropcap]s Emma explains, the horses are usually surrendered by owners who are no longer willing or able to care for them, although others are referred to Second Venture because of concerns about neglect.

The rescued horses are picked up by the Second Venture rep, vet checked and, if required, have a visit by the dentist and farrier, all at the rep's expense. The rep also covers the floating costs to collect the horses and provides feed, blankets and all the other necessities, including retraining and resocialisation.

When they are happy and healthy again, each horse is rehomed with a new owner who doesn't pay for the horse, other than a \$35 a year "leasing" fee. Second Venture then checks on the horse after a month, six months and a year to see that it is in good hands.

"The only horses we don't rehouse are stallions, for obvious reasons, and we won't let a horse go until it is safe to be around," Emma says.

Emma has been the south-west Victorian rep for about a month and had her first surrender last week, Floss, an 18-year-old thoroughbred chestnut that she intends to keep as one of five horses she cares for.



Now that's roughage! Home-made horse treats are one way of raising funds.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"] S
[/dropcap]econd Venture relies entirely on donations and the goodwill of supporters who are prepared to loan a float, for example, or offer equine services at a discount rate and so it's not surprising that much of Emma's time is taken up with finding ways of raising funds.

When *Bluestone* visited, Emma was preparing horse treats made of molasses, oats and other horsey ingredients to sell to raise money for the horse sales, where Second Venture tries to buy horses that are otherwise destined for the knackery. The horse treats, thankfully, have been selling like hotcakes through orders on her Facebook page.

Shari Henderson, from Cherwood Park Equine Supplies in Warrnambool, has been one of Emma's biggest supporters and continues to admire her dedication.

"We need more like her," she says.

We happen to agree: Emma is our first quiet hero for 2014. You can contact Emma via her [Facebook page](#) or on 0432 625 880. Find out more about Second Venture Horse Rescue [here](#).

[box] Emma will receive a coffee and cake voucher from [The Pavilion Café](#) in Warrnambool. Thankyou to owners Mary-Ellen and Jon Watson for supporting this week's Quiet Hero.[/box]



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