

A very special KVHA Exhibitor Spotlight  
Saddlebred Rescue brings The Main Man home to Charleston, WV  
By Jodi Mondy

You might have guessed by now that I'm an avid supporter of **Saddlebred Rescue**. I enjoy reading about the new "survivors" they bring home each Monday; seeing the horses' pictures and reading their evaluations and updates during their quest to find their forever home. I've enjoyed reading the *never ending stories* about the horses that have captured our hearts and the special people who have adopted these horses. I've shared in the triumphs and shared personal sorrows and milestones. And I have even found great knowledge & support in the *care & training suggestions* thread.

Through SBR I have met some great people and made new friends. Most of my new peers are located across this great country and a handful live and have horses right here in our region. One friend and fellow SBR supporter in particular is Amy Michael. I first read about Amy Michael when I was reading the SBR Discussion Forum's thread called "The Main Man". I read The Main Man's initial evaluation and the posts that followed. Only a handful of posts later it said that The Main Man was going to live in Charleston, West Virginia.



The Main Man gets his photo taken  
For the "available" page.

I wrote SBR and asked about The Main Man's new caregiver and just moments before I heard back from SBR, Amy Michael had emailed me and told me that SBR forwarded my request to meet her. Amy immediately invited me to come to Champion Hollow Farm to meet her newest love. Amy sure was nice but let me be the first to pledge; The Main Man, aka, Mr. Big is super nice! I saw the photos from his evaluation but seeing him in person took my breath away. He is beautiful, proud and quite the gentleman.



Amy Michael, proud new caregiver of  
The Main Man, aka, Mr. Big.

As always, I hadn't left home without my camera and I was able to get a picture of The Main Man, aka, Mr. Big and Amy. Amy also agreed to talk to me about her rescue, Mr. Big and Saddlebred Rescue. Below is the Q & A I'd like to share with KVHA readers.

**Q. How did you learn about SBR?**

**A.** In talking with people about wanting a horse, saying that I really just wanted a "play" horse, didn't want to spend a great deal of money and being more interested in giving a good home, etc.....I was told of SBR

**Q. How long before you found *your* horse?**

**A.** I actually "lurked" on the site for a while before actually becoming a member, but when I saw there were some very nice horses in need of homes, I joined.....

**Q. What is Mr. Big's story and how did he come to be yours?**

**A.** I first saw the thread entitled "The Main Man", that was intriguing to me, I read his story, looked at his pictures.....and I WANTED that one!! Something about his eyes...a sadness, loss of life look.....he "spoke" to me, he needed a loving owner. I emailed Pat Johnson of SBR to see if he was still available, and I guess I was the first to inquire about him. She actually called and spoke to me a few times, making sure that I was "suitable" for him. SBR really cares about where the horses are placed. I passed the background check and then started making arrangements to get him to Charleston.

He had come from the Amish to go through the New Holland auction in Pennsylvania. As far as anyone knew, and had pulled a buggy for many years; in fact, he came to me with his road shoes on. His papers were not with him, if he had ever been registered at all - that is still a mystery. I keep thinking there is someone out there who loved this horse and would like to know what happened to him. I may never find out who he really is.

After working with him, I could tell that he has had some very good training in his life. He knows all three gaits, remembers the rail, and how to work.

His manners are very nice; he is sooo personable and soaks up attention. His natural motion is beautiful and he is all saddlebred!! After the first couple of months, he is beginning to show/exhibit some life to him and he has a very sweet personality, a bit mischievous at times as well.

**Q. How long did it take you to get him?**

**A.** Not long at all, actually, the deal fell into place and it seemed to go quite fast. There was a load of horses going west, and after some fast talking on my behalf (from Pat, God bless her!), the hauler decided he could in fact come through West Virginia. His name is Dale and he does marathon trips for SBR with his brother Doug, and they were just awesome men!! They left New Jersey and made a round trip to WV, KY, MS, and IL, all within about a 36 hour period! I was so grateful to them - it was a gorgeous sight to behold when they pulled off the I-64/Oakwood Exit on Dec 5 with that big silver trailer full of rescues. "Big" was the first to be dropped, and it was very early in the morning. The guys had been driving for almost 24 hours straight when they got to us.

**Q. How long have you had him now?**

**A.** He came on Dec 5, 2006, so I suppose he has been with us now almost close to four months

**Q. What are some of the highlights?**

**A.** I can honestly say that the day he came off that trailer was one of the happiest days in my life. My heart felt as though it would burst right out of my chest.

**Q. What are your plans with your horse?**

**A.** My biggest plan is to let Big know that his working days are over!! He is living the good life.....turn outs, treats ( he had to learn to take treats), very light work and trail riding, extended grooming sessions, all of which he seems to enjoy.

**Q. What are a few things you think is important for KVHA folks to know about SBR?**

**A.** I would like for the (horse) programs in our area to consider SBR for their needs as far as lesson programs, hobby horses, therapy horses, trail horses, or even Academy horses. If every barn who stands saddlebreds/show horses would adopt one, that could make a huge dent in the needless slaughter of very nice horses with tons of versatility, life to live, love to give.....it's truly a way to "give back" to the animals we all love and adore - it's where our heart is.

**Q. Would you do it again?**

**A.** In a word.....ABSOLUTELY!!!

**Q. Do you think SBR and its supporters are "good people"?**

**A.** Oh yes! The people who are on the band wagon to support SBR are the greatest of "horse people", we all know that horse people are the greatest people on earth!! ;)

**Q. Closing statement?**

**A.** Every horse that has worked his whole life, deserves a chance to prove he is worthy of living his life with the right "forever home".....there are many opportunities for us to give back.....take a chance, you don't know until you try!!

Since their non-profit 501(c) 3 status in 2006, Saddlebred Rescue has placed more than 166 horses. Not just Saddlebreds, but Morgans, Hackneys, Drafts, Standardbreds & others. They help place NON-SBR ASB horses as well as NON-ASB horses. Saddlebred Rescue does not discriminate against breeds or those who turn in their horses. You will never hear SBR say anything negative about brokers or the Amish: these families' hearts are broken when they come to SBR to turn over their beloved family member who is no longer able to haul long distances. This is another reason I am so proud to be a part of such an honorable group.

Most recently, Nealia McCracken & Pat Johnson were awarded the USEF Pegasus Heroes for Horses award. They were honored on January 12<sup>th</sup> in Lexington, KY. This award is presented to an individual(s) or organization(s) that have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the protection and welfare of horses and/or have saved equines through an act of courage and resolve during a crisis situation.

For more information please visit the Saddlebred Rescue, Inc. booth at the KVHA show in Winfield on April 21<sup>st</sup> (weather permitting) or online at <http://www.saddlebredrescue.com>. A personal favorite of mine, the SBR Angel Network's discussion forum is at: [http://forum.saveasaddlebred.org/.](http://forum.saveasaddlebred.org/) You may also call Pat Johnson directly at 908-362-1880 or 908-304-3560 cell.