Of the 114 horses sheltered during this “Year of the Horse,” 3 were pregnant. DEFHR made sure these foals got a healthy start to life. In April alone, DEFHR provided critical care to 17 horses seized by MD animal protection officials, and throughout the year helped find sanctuary for other horses in need. The number of volunteer hours and people reached through DEFHR’s educational programs showed continued growth.

Before DEFHR, abused/neglected horses in Maryland had no place to go. When officials determined a horse’s life was in peril, they often ordered the owner to sell or euthanize the animal. DEFHR has become the leading equine rescue in Maryland and the east coast.

*This is an awesome organization. We initially started going out there for our Aspergers son Brendan as part of his therapy. His life goal is to help animals. We soon found out you simply cannot go to DEFHR without wanting to jump right in and help. They do amazing work for the horses. We now as a family volunteer there.*

–Donna Gill, volunteer, horse sponsor

Horses like Anastasia (featured on the cover) received top-notch critical care thanks to donors like you!
**DEFHR** touches the lives of horses and humans alike through education! Teaching is at the core of DEFHR’s mission—our Internship Program brought participants from as far away as Europe, and our Equine Cruelty Investigator trainings welcomed emergency responders from states surrounding Maryland.

**Sharing/Teaching**

*Sharing* our stories increased our social media presence, helping spread awareness!

We expanded our Legacy Programs and our educational trainings for volunteers and first responders, as well as launched a Homeschool Education Series. Our equine ambassadors helped **build awareness** at expos and other community events.

It is not enough to just read about something; you must go out and learn about it firsthand. And now I can never go back to who I was before. I came to DEFHR seeking an experience for myself (and I got that too) but my journey undoubtedly transformed into something beyond the attainment of personal goals; it became a summer-long endeavor For The Horses.

—Paloma Paige, summer intern

The staff at DEFHR always amazes us with their friendliness, professionalism, fun and generous spirits... It’s always a treat for us to make the two-hour round-trip drive out to the farm because of the horses, but even more because of the friendliness and love you feel from the staff. We [horse sponsors] feel that goodness whenever we are there.

—Kevin Byrne, horse sponsor
FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When I see transformations like one on this Annual Report’s cover and then notes like the one on the next page, I am reminded of the ripple effect of DEFHR’s good works. Yes, we take care of abused and neglected horses, protecting and healing them, training and finding them adoption homes. But we also impact the lives of countless people, through our volunteer and educational programs, and community outreach efforts.

The impact is often tangible, when we see a child’s eyes light up as they love on a rescue horse, or we hear how an internship helped a student realize their dream of going to vet school. Often the ripples are invisible, even taking place in virtual reality through our website and social media.

We have come a long way since our founding 25 years ago. During 2014 alone, our Facebook followers grew 219%! We also have many new Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest followers. We expect these numbers to continue increasing as we learn new and different ways to connect with people passionate about making this world a better place for horses and humans. Thank you supporting DEFHR during 2014—a year of growth, leading, sharing and teaching.

Gratefully yours, Erin Ochoa

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2014 DEFHR Fiscal Year Contributions

Program Service Fees: 6%
Sales/Other Revenue: 2%
Special Events: 7%
Public Support/Direct Contributions: 85%

Your CHANGE helps us CHANGE the lives of HORSES and our COMMUNITY!