Media Contact: Cindy Gendron: 757-932-0394; cindy@homesforhorses.org

Record Numbers Convene for 2016 Homes for Horses Coalition Conference

Equine rescues and sanctuaries from across the country gathered in Nashville, TN on September 23 and 24 for the 2016 Homes for Horses Coalition conference. The only national conference for horse rescues and sanctuaries that support the SAFE Act brought together 156 people from 81 different organizations for training, networking and moral support.

A wide range of topics vital to equine welfare, including rehabilitation of starved horses, reporting animal crimes, adoption practices, volunteers, social media and trainer challenges were presented by experts from national organizations, law enforcement agencies and horse rescues. Sariah Hopkins, Executive Director of Safe Harbor Equine and Livestock Sanctuary, said, "We were so grateful for the opportunity to attend The Homes for Horses Coalition Conference. We were able to bring 10 representatives from the rescue and each of us had a phenomenal learning and networking experience. We have already integrated improvements in our practices learned at the conference. We encourage any equine rescue that wants a best practices approach to animal welfare to attend each year. The educational opportunity is priceless."

The conference opened Friday with a networking session on fundraising, allowing attendees to build relationships and glean ideas from each other. A private screening of the film *Harry and Snowman*, which makes its theatrical debut September 30, moved the audience and closed out Friday's schedule. Saturday included a full-day of learning with presentations, panels and more networking. Many conference goers enjoyed the sights and sounds of downtown Nashville on Saturday night.

"To have this cumulative expertise in one place at one time provides a unique experience and I am grateful that so many rescues were able to take advantage of this amazing opportunity to learn and share," said Cindy Gendron, The Homes for Horses Coalition Manager. "One of the best ways to discover innovative methods for doing things is by hearing from others that have overcome the same obstacles to excel in particular areas," said Gendron. The Homes for Horses Coalition Conference is a rare opportunity for equine welfare organizations from across the country to come together face-to-face and share knowledge and community. The energy and openness is exhilarating and I think everyone leaves with a renewed commitment to their vital work of saving at-risk equines."

The annual conference is open to anyone involved in, or interested in, horse rescue and sanctuary work and is offered at a minimal registration cost, thanks to the coalition's sponsoring organizations, the Animal Welfare Institute, the ASPCA (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®), and The Humane Society of the United States' Jeannie and Jim Dodson Equine Protection Fund. The coalition currently has 375 members and is the only professional organization dedicated solely to providing training and support to the nation's equine welfare community.

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About The Homes for Horses Coalition

The Homes for Horses Coalition is supported by the ASPCA (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®), the Animal Welfare Institute and The Humane Society of the United States' Jeannie and Jim Dodson Equine Protection Fund. It is dedicated to ending horse slaughter and other forms of equine abuse, while promoting growth, collaboration and professionalism in the equine rescue and protection community. Find us online at www.homesforhorses.org and on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/#!/HomesforHorses.