

THE HUMAN TOUCH

Submitted by: Walter Paetkau

"There are lots of stories in the making at the rescue; this is one of them."

One day I climbed into the hayloft to see about our hay. Someone had told me the bales were scattered and piled up in various ways. Sure enough there were tunnels and pathways and loose hay. I suspected who had done it and e-mailed the two children saying what I had seen and suggesting it must have been a lot of fun to make tunnels and such and that I would have done the same thing when I was a kid. Then I said that while it was fun it messed up the hay and would be harder to handle and that it was important not to play with the hay. No doubt the mothers read the letter as well.

The mother daughter team is always great to observe as they poop scoop, feed the horses and groom them. They are a happy bunch. The mothers e-mailed back, somewhat in embarrassment, and said they had talked to the daughters.

The following week I slipped by again to do some work on the yard and as I was shovelling some gravel the two young girls came up to me, stopped hand in hand, looked up sweetly and said, "We're sorry, Walter, we will not mess up the hay again." Some nice hugs and everything was cheery again.

Some months later I was about to start the tractor on a Monday morning but it would not start. The battery was dead so I had to jump start the tractor and re-charge the battery. As I thought about the problem I could visualize what happened. Our young pre-school cowboy with the big white Stetson hat must have been playing farmer and in playing with the various knobs had turned on the lights, for the light switch was still on when I checked the panel.



I e-mailed the father and he acknowledged that it must have been his son and apologized. The following Saturday morning I came by to check on some things. The small boy slowly left his father and walked over to the shelter and stopped at the corner. From under his big cowboy hat his blue eyes looked up to me as he quietly said, "I am sorry".

I took his hand and walked with him to the tractor, together with his father. I placed him on the seat and showed him the various levers and the light switch and said that none of these could be touched. Then I placed his hands on the steering wheel and said he could pretend he was driving and that his father needed to be around when he wanted to get on the tractor. Later, from a distance, I saw father and son on the tractor, the son, a happy farmer.

The End