

Branded Mare Star of Taffy Missing From Nebraska Quarter Horse Farm

Stolen Horse International has issued an alert for the horse that went missing on June 12.

June 19, 2009

Star of Taffy, an AQHA registered mare missing since June 12, has a star and snip and a brand on her right hip. We all have patterns in our lives that repeat. You are here when you want to be there, there when you want to be here, traveling for business when you want to be home, home when you need to be traveling, which sometimes cuts into your favorite activity: saddling up your favorite horse and riding. What happens when we finally find time to ride and we open the door to the barn to halter your horse and it is not there?

Stolen Horse International is trying to make sense out of why so many horses are still coming up missing in the United States, especially after processing three reports regarding missing and stolen AQHA horses in three states.

With all of this disorder and mayhem that many of us experience in our daily lives we forget to take care of, or don't even think about protecting ourselves against theft. The recession has spurred cut backs, layoffs and, now, increased theft.

Star of Taffy, better known as Star, is an 18-year-old Liver Chestnut AQHA Quarter Horse mare taken from the Frink Quarter Horse Farm on June 12, 2009, in Lincoln, Nebraska. The theft left her owner Susan Frink, few clues of what happen to her horse. Star has a brand on her right hip that has a 4F with an arrow underneath pointing toward her head.

The family learned about Stolen Horse International (SHI), a nonprofit organization that helps owners spread the word about missing and stolen horses via their international NetPosse email network. An IDAHO Alert (the equine version of an AMBER Alert for missing children) was issued with Star's information and picture to NetPosse volunteers.

"We've learned time is of the essence in recovering a stolen horse," says Debi Metcalfe, president and founder of Stolen Horse International. "Within a few days, any stolen horse can be transported across the United States and sold at auction several times, or even transported across the border into Canada or Mexico, where horse slaughter is still legal."

Once an IDAHO Alert is issued for a stolen or missing horse, NetPosse volunteers distribute a customized flyer and webpage to thousands of other people, via their online and email contacts and list groups. The flyer is also available at www.netposse.com, so that anyone can print out the flyer and post it in their area. SHI recommends tack and feed stores, auction barns, restaurants, and convenience stores; in short, anywhere that area people, and potential witnesses, congregate.

After Star's IDAHO Alert was issued Frick contacted Stolen Horse International to offer a reward for information that leads to the return of the horse, hoping that the money would result in the quick recovery of her mare.

"I would like to add \$1000.00 reward for the return of Star to us," said Susan in an email to Debi Metcalfe. "Is there any chance you can get that added to your website?"

Shortly thereafter the webpage and flyer was updated and you can print a flyer and read more information about Star on the NetPosse.com site.

Horse theft is a crime that is alive and thriving in the U.S. today. It is estimated that thousands of horses are missing each year, and thieves often take horse tack, vehicles, or other items from the same location. With the help of volunteers through NetPosse.com, many horses are recovered, and there is hope for victims like the Susan Frink and her family.

Stolen Horse International is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. SHI was founded in 1998 by Debi Metcalfe after she and her family spent nearly a year trying to locate Idaho, their spotted Racking horse. Idaho was recovered when a flyer they had posted at a convenience store resulted in the tip they needed.

SHI provides theft education, outreach, and recovery services that are available at the SHI website: www.netposse.com.

Read on for tips on preventing horse theft.