



Helping Chuck

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By Lindsay Hocker, Best Friends Network volunteer

Hooves & Paws Rescue has a special horse in need of surgery.

Chuck, who has helped teach many special needs children and adults how to horseback ride as [Hooves & Paws Rescue's](#) lesson horse, is an almost 19-year-old quarter horse with a tumor on his leg.

"Everyone loves Chuck and anyone can ride him," Hooves & Paws president Genea Stoops said. "He never has offered any bad behavior, ever. He is just a gentleman and very smart."

Hooves & Paws teaches basic horsemanship, from beginning level to barrel racing. Stoops said the lessons focus on the proper care of horses, what it cost to keep a horse, and how big of a responsibility horse guardianship is.

"He has been a huge part of our program," Stoops said.

For now, though, Chuck isn't going out on rides. As soon as his tumor was discovered, Stoops said no one has been allowed to ride Chuck.

"Right now he just hangs out with his girlfriend AnnaBelle and all the other horses at the rescue until he is able to be operated on," she said.

AnnaBelle is a horse who came to the rescue after she was beaten by an abuser. Stoops said AnnaBelle and Chuck are inseparable.

"She needed a special horse to love her and that is what Chuck does for her, he loves her," she said.

Stoops said the rescue will have to raise \$1,500-\$2,000 in order for Chuck to have his surgery. When he had his last X-ray, the tumor was not attached to the bone. She said if a tumor connects to the bone, the risk is higher for problems after surgery, and the cost increases.

Hooves & Paws Rescue is a no-kill shelter for horses and large breed dogs that is located in Glenwood, Iowa. It became a nonprofit in September 2006.

- People can help by donating money to pay for Chuck's surgery or for the rescue's daily expenses through PayPal, by going to the rescue's website, www.hoovespaws.org.