

# TIMING IS EVERYTHING

**I get a lot of calls. Calls looking to find a home for an animal, looking for advice on a current animal, looking for a quality veterinarian, feed store, farrier, trainer or all of the above; but today was different.**

I picked up the phone on my way out the door. A familiar voice asked if we had room for another horse. My answer was "well; not really.... Why?"

Apparently my friend had a friend who was the neighbor of a very nice couple who had bought a small farm with an eventual retirement plan to be among chickens, goats and a couple of riding horses. Years ago when coming to this country they had planned a mini-farm retirement and looked forward to learning to ride. They raised kids, ran a business, bought a few acres and were looking towards a more quite life within the next few years.

To set up their farm they acquired a small herd of goats to help clear the land. They made friends with a neighbor who looked after the brood until they could make the farm a fulltime residence.

And then they set out to find a horse... They looked at big ones and small ones. They found some they were afraid of and some who were afraid of them. But they found one they could not refuse. She was fairly thin, sad looking but had some nifty spots on her coat and was just the right size for 'mom' to ride. After deciding they could do a good deed to fatten and love this horse, they brought her home.

Time went by. They fed the mare; she stayed thin. They dewormed her; she stayed thin. They changed her feed; she stayed thin. They dewormed her again. then changed feed; then dewormed; then changed feed - all at the advice of 'helpful' people; but all to no avail. The mare stayed thin.

One morning the answer to the predicament became evident - there was a baby by her side. Finally doing what they should have been

advised in the beginning, they called a vet. The doctor came and examined both; offering a protocol for survival. The couple took the prognosis very seriously and after an emotional struggle decided they were ill equipped to care for an ailing mare let alone one with a foal.

Hence, the call to me that day. Yes, we would take the pair.

Their current names no longer fitting, the dam was called Kwil and the filly became Angel's Choice. It was a hard but selfless choice the couple made to offer the duo a better life than they thought they could give, and her name would honor that.

We watched as the mare gained weight, became sound and spent wonderful days with her baby but time has a way of catching us all. Although the mare's Coggins papers called her twelve she was closer to thirty. By the time she was filled out it was nearly a year later one would never have guessed her true age. Through all the hardships the mare had never been ill. The vet came - it was mild; all looked good but he was concerned with an unusual 'mass'. The mare recovered and had a good night. All vitals working well. Monday another bout but again the vet was pleased with her status; still concerned with the 'mass'. Tuesday was a good day all around but Wednesday said it all. The vet was called back for the third time. This time her heart rate was threatening and the 'mass' had enlarged rapidly. With a deep sadness the vet advised to stop the downward spiral and we agreed. Shortly after twelve noon, mother Kwil was humanely euthanized. She was pretty, sound, looked half her age and loved her baby.

Almost precisely twelve hours later, just after midnight, Kwil's best friend gave birth to her own filly. That mare finished raising the little yearling with her foal and to this day they are a threesome; seldom far apart. The world took Kwil when she was at her best but gave her baby a new beginning. ■