

# Caring for blind horses leads to children's book

BY JENNIFER ATKINS BROWN  
STAFF WRITER

While on a trip to Israel in February 2007, Emilie Storch became mesmerized by a fellow traveler who was blind.

"She turned out to be the best tourist because her senses were so strong," Storch said.

Upon returning to Greensboro, Storch found it an interesting coincidence that while she was gone someone had donated a blind horse to Horse Friends, the non-profit therapeutic riding organization of which she is president.

The horse, which she named Flurry, was skinny and in poor health, but Storch was not deterred. She cleaned her up, dewormed her and began the process of training her to work with Horse Friends.

With three locations in Greensboro, Horse Friends offers therapeutic riding to children with autism, children and adults with mental and physical disabilities, and adults with multiple sclerosis.

"She ended up being a phenomenal riding horse because, like the tourist I met, her senses were so strong," Storch said.

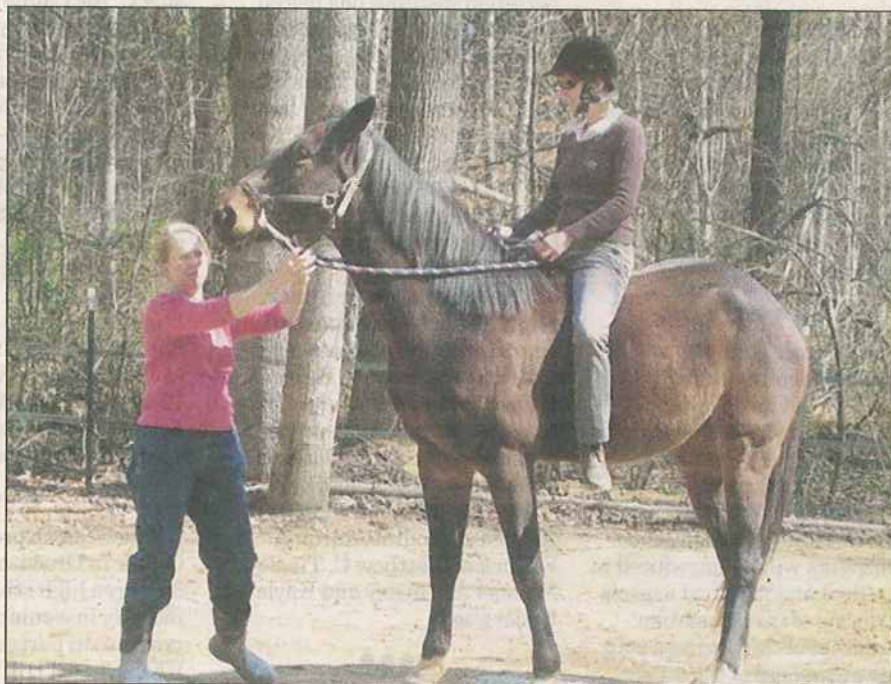
Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis two years ago, Storch felt an immediate bond with Flurry.

"We were a disabled animal and person doing this together," she said.

But then Flurry unexpectedly died, leaving Storch heartbroken and determined to help other blind horses.

In honor of Flurry, she started a project called Flurry's Hope, an organization that works to increase public awareness of the treasure in blind horses and their potential for riding. The organization also helps others learn how to care for and train their blind horses.

"The world thinks you should kill blind horses," Storch said. "We're trying to change that worldview and get people to understand that blind horses can be even



LAUREN SHELMDINE/SPECIAL TO THE NEWS & RECORD

Emilie Storch leads Promise, one of the blind horses featured in her children's book, as Caldwell Academy art teacher Deirdre Kevorkian rides and demonstrates the horse's keen ability to sense people.

better to ride."

Using the Internet, she works with people across the country.

Storch acquired two more blind horses — Promise, a former racehorse who was going to be killed, and Belle, who was going to be sold for slaughter. The horses now are used with Horse Friends.

"They trust you and don't run away, and they are so grateful," she said. "Belle now will gallop in the fields with you and even ride in the dark."

Itching to do more to save blind horses, Storch decided to write a children's book about Flurry, Belle and Promise and sought the help of a friend, Deirdre

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more information about Flurry's Hope or to purchase a copy of "Horses Who See With Their Hearts," visit [www.flurryshope.com](http://www.flurryshope.com) or [www.restingplacebooks.com](http://www.restingplacebooks.com). For more information about Horse Friends, visit [www.horsefriendsnc.com](http://www.horsefriendsnc.com).

Kevorkian, an art teacher at Caldwell Academy.

SEE HORSES, PAGE 12