

Helping rescue a horse

When the first Amish families came to Stone Arabia in March 1986, the words 'horse power' came back from a generation before. Road horses and farm teams were again seen on our roads and in the fields.

Years ago, I drove into the farm dooryard and of a new Amish friend, Andy. I noticed several Amish men and boys running back of the barn. I had no idea what was happening or if I should invade the scene. But I ran back also. A large work horse had broken through a wooden planked ramp that led to the upper barn floor. There was no question that if the horse fell into the narrow deep opening below it would be doomed. The overhanging roof that protected the planks afforded a place to attach a pulley and rope to help raise the horse, if possible. A wide strap had been put around the horse and the rope attached.

The available man power was not enough. Andy asked if I thought my van would raise it. It was the horse's only chance so I decided to give it a try. The rope running over the pulley was high, making the rope run at a steep angle to where it was to be attached to the van. That would adversely affect the traction the van could have. The vehicle was light and at a disadvantage. Let's give it a try.

On the first pull the wheels spun and did nothing. Another try was necessary. For a moment, the van settled on the ground and there was enough power to somewhat raise the horse. It was just enough to help the horse get out of its predicament and walk away. Andy said that the horse had just had its second brush with disaster. Before coming here, it had been in a burning barn and badly singed before it could be rescued.

Things have changed since that day. Andy has moved away and a new barn and house now occupy the site. The horse has doubtless gone to a just reward but the fateful day it got a second chance remains in the mind of an aged resident of Stone Arabia.

Skip Barshied, Stone Arabia