

**STOLEN HORSE INTERNATIONAL, INC.
PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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NetPosse Announces Stolen Horse Max Recovered 58 Weeks after Theft through Flyer at FarmFest

Springfield, MO – A call from Missouri Sunday morning, October 4, 2009, ended an Illinois' family's year-long mission to find their daughter's stolen horse, Max. Shortly thereafter, Debi Metcalfe, founder of Stolen Horse International, Inc. (SHI), received a call from the Caughrans, relaying the amazing news that their horse was coming home.

Maximum Reflections, better know as Max, an American Paint Horse was taken from his pasture in Flat Rock, Illinois, August 23, 2008, leaving Kaitlynn Bliiskie, Keith Caughran's stepdaughter devastated. Since that time, Keith has done everything possible to locate Kaitlynn's horse from buying a computer and learning to navigate the Internet to offering his truck as a reward.

Within a few days of Max's theft, Keith filed a report with SHI's Web site, NetPosse.com, the only nonprofit dedicated to public education regarding stolen and missing horses and assistance in recovering those horses. After a stolen horse is reported, a personal webpage is posted on NetPosse.com, allowing the public to quickly find contact information and learn of updates in a case. Then a flyer is created and an IDAHO Alert (the equine version of an AMBER Alert) is issued. [NetPosse](http://NetPosse.com) volunteers utilize these critical tools to network via the Internet with horse owners and equine communities, notifying them of the stolen or missing horse.

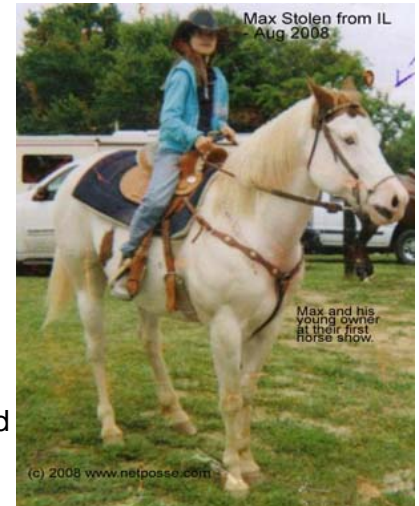
"We actively work around the clock every day and follow countless leads for the horses listed on the site. Sometimes we look at these horses and wonder where they are while we wait on that one phone call to let us know one has been found. That one call makes every moment of worry and wonder worth it for the horse owner and for our volunteers. This is why we do what we do," Debi said.

Debi was overwhelmed by the feeling of déjà vu when she received the call from the Caughrans with the news Max had been found. "Because Max is so uniquely marked like Idaho [the Metcalfe's stolen mare and reason SHI was founded] and his story is similar to what happened to us in 1997, I couldn't help but cry. I could not even speak for a moment. Not only was I elated that Max had been found but it brought back the moment when we got our call after 51 weeks in 1998 along with all of the emotions."

A year ago, SHI issued a Press Release pleading for Max's return in which Keith stated: "Our family is just stunned ... We cannot believe he is gone" ... and Kaitlynn added, "I cannot concentrate in school, focus on homework, watch TV or even go to sleep without thinking about him. He was my best friend and my whole life."

Since experiencing the loss of Max, the family has yearned for the day he was found, but couldn't quite comprehend it was truly happening. "We were all crying. We just couldn't believe that after all this time we finally got the call we had been waiting for!" Susan Caughran told Debi Metcalfe when describing their reaction to learning Max had been found. The family was at a horse show Sunday when they received the call.

When Debi Metcalfe asked Kaitlynn how she was feeling she quickly answered, "I feel excited and impatient!"



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Kim Gully of Springfield, Mo., bought Max about a month ago through a connection in a Craigslist ad. Her cousin saw the stolen horse flyer this weekend at Farmfest, an event at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds, and called her. Kim knew that buying a horse over the Internet had its risks, but never dreamed she was buying a stolen horse for her 7-year-old daughter, MacKenzie. After a brief Internet search, Kim's fears were confirmed as she found out the rest of the story about her daughter's horse. However, she immediately notified the police and set the wheels in motion so Max could go home.

The Caughran family is thrilled to be getting Max back, so much so that they are taking another horse for MacKenzie as a replacement for Max.

"I always thought Max would be found. I personally never gave up and encouraged Susan and Keith to do the same, especially when there seemed to be no hope," Debi relayed. "As I would expect, Keith and Susan have a mixture of emotions. It has been 58 weeks and they never gave up, nor did Stolen Horse International."

However, Debi is quick to point out that the Caughrans aren't the only victims of horse theft in this case. The Gully's are suffering, too, as they prepare to part with Max. While they find comfort in doing the right thing and reuniting him with the girl has pined for him this past year, watching her little girl say goodbye to the horse she has grown to love will not be easy for Kim.

Ironically, when Keith called Metcalfe, she was working on fitting Max's story into a presentation that she will be giving on Tuesday at a law enforcement conference in Mississippi. Throughout Sunday, as Debi prepared for her flight the next day from SHI headquarters in North Carolina, she spoke with the Caughrans and Kim, while updating Max's page on the Web site. The news was a good note to start the week on.

Horse theft is not a crime that went out with the "Old West Days" as many would think. It is alive and thriving in the U.S. today. It is estimated that thousands of horses are missing each year. With the help of volunteers through NetPosse.com, many horses are recovered, and there is hope for other victims like the Caughrans.

Max's case is like so many others processed at NetPosse.com, and one of many with a happy ending for his owners because of others in the equine community. When Max's report was processed, as in all theft cases received by SHI, NetPosse volunteers began distributing the NetPosse flyer and web page by the thousands through their online contacts and list groups. These flyers were posted throughout the U.S. at every possible livestock venue. And it was this very effort by volunteers that directly led to Max's recovery in another state.

NetPosse Executive Coordinator Angela Kirby was astounded to see the rodeo grounds in her hometown of Montgomery, Ala., plastered with Max's flyers last March. She states, "I am sometimes amazed by the outpouring of support victims receive from horse owners across the country, but it is so reassuring. We always tell these horse owners not to give up no matter how many days or weeks have passed. Oftentimes, they are refueled and encouraged by the words and actions of complete strangers."

Metcalfe states further, "Thank you all who have helped in any way in the effort to bring Max home and experience the happy ending for the Caughran family! We never underestimate the power of one and we never, ever give up here at NetPosse.com."

Please help reunite other families with their missing and stolen horses by visiting www.netposse.com. These victims' stories need to be shared so that more horses can come home! Anyone can print a flyer to post in area feed or tack stores, auctions barns, restaurants or convenience stores – anywhere people congregate. You don't have to be a horse owner to help.

For more on Max and his homecoming, visit: <http://netposse.com/stolenmissing/MaxILstolenAug08.htm>