

Published letters in response to NY Daily News post of August 24, 2021: [Put these steeds out to pasture: It's time to replace carriage horses with electric vehicles](#)

Thursday, August 26, 2021:

Their suffering is plain to see

Manhattan: On Aug. 26, 1991, the Daily News ran my photo of a dead carriage horse in Central Park. The horse, Nickel, had died and was awaiting disposal when I came across her body hidden under a tarp. Now, 30 years later to the day, NYC's carriage horses continue to suffer and die. The laws that are supposed to protect them are anemic and enforcement is nonexistent. The NYC Department of Health is supposed to monitor these animals, but the agency appears to have no interest in their welfare. The mayor and the City Council also have no interest in the plight of these poor, used, abused and neglected animals. When a horse was caught on video dropping dead in Central Park, they shrugged it off. An emaciated horse with an open wound/sore was photographed working in Central Park — silence. The so-called progressives running NYC are cruel and indifferent to the plight of these poor animals. It's time for them to act like responsible adults and end this abusive and archaic industry now. *Peter Wood*

An alternative exists

Manhattan: The carriage horse industry is a blight on our beautiful city. There has been so much suffering and deaths of innocent horses through the years that it is long overdue to end it! The horses are overworked and not well cared for or properly treated when ill, as witnessed by the recent death of a carriage horse whose ribs were showing as she dragged along the streets, where she collapsed and died. And there is no oversight by any of the city departments. They are forced to work in the worst weather — extreme cold and extreme heat. It is time for us to follow other major cities that have ended this exploitation and abuse. Electric carriages are a wonderful cruelty-free option. New York, let's make this happen! *Elaine Sloan*

Time to retire (2)

Wheaton, Ill.: The horse carriages used in Central Park are a blatant daily sign of NYC's stubbornness in holding onto an abhorrent symbol of mankind's ongoing abuse of animals. It is an exploitative tradition that must be replaced with more comfortable and modern electric carriages. There are many international cities that have made the compassionate switch to electric cars, which offer good-paying union jobs without the ongoing maintenance costs of caring for the horses that drivers endure currently. The transition to electric carriages is both an economic and a public safety issue. The recurring accidents in which passengers, bystanders and horses are hurt are well-documented over many years. As NYC tourists, our family strongly believes that it is past the time for this cruelty to animals to be ended. *Diane Kastel*

Mashpee, Mass.: I am writing in support of replacing horse-drawn carriages with electric motor carriages on the streets of New York City and other cities in the U.S. As a supporter of Equine Advocates Rescue Center in Chatham, N.Y., I am in favor of releasing carriage horses from this unnatural urban occupation, both from a humanitarian standpoint as well as an ecological one. *Susan Sharpe*

Saturday, August 28, 2021:

Examine the evidence

Memphis: The level of cruelty to these poor carriage horses has not changed in many years. America has evolved greatly in how people are treated. We are swapping out gas engines for electric ones. But we still

cruelly abuse animals. Making horses pull oversized loads like carriages is beyond cruel; forced to toil in all-weather extremes, dodge traffic and pound the pavement all day long. They suffer debilitating respiratory issues and leg problems from walking on hard surfaces. Don't listen to the drivers. There is much proof that they lie about the horses' condition to make money. Horses have collapsed while hauling carriages through the streets! Anyone who rides one of these horse-drawn carriages should be ashamed of themselves. Look carefully for the horse's downtrodden condition, for the worn-away hair and wounds under the belly band and neck strap. *Elizabeth Reed*

Boycotting

Menlo Park, Calif.: My husband and I are in the fortunate position of being able to travel anywhere in the world, spending our money on beautiful hotels and eating delicious food. One of our favorite cities is NYC, and how we love going to the plays and seeing musicals there! Unfortunately, in the city of beautiful people and places, we have encountered the horrific treatment of carriage horses in Central Park: horses forced to work overtime, horses with ribs showing from lack of nutrition, horses spooked or run over by traffic, horses shown no human compassion. Due to these unfortunate circumstances, my family has taken a vow to never visit NYC again until the carriage horses are put out into pastures where they belong. *Carol Taggart*

Sunday, August 29, 2012:

Give carriage drivers some credit

Raleigh, N.C.: I am the daughter of a first-generation carriage-horse owner and former driver. I grew up in the park visiting the horses and inside the stables, where some of my best childhood memories are. My dad loves his horses more than anything and they were always a part of our family. He always let me name them and I would love to go see them in the stables and the park. Every driver I ever saw waiting in the park was laughing and talking to their horses, feeding them treats or petting them with tourists! When I heard about the subject of electric cars replacing carriages, I was so shocked that for my senior year of high school, I wrote my senior research paper on NYCLASS and Bill de Blasio trying to get rid of horse-drawn carriages in Central Park. You cannot replace history, and the carriages are a huge part of New York City's history. They have always been around and should always be around. An electric car driving around Central Park would completely take away from the park's magic. Horse-drawn carriages complement the park's natural beauty. It upsets me when I see people try and talk about the carriages like they've actually been there. People who have never been inside the stables or seen in person how these drivers truly are. They love their horses. Taking away these jobs from people to replace them with electric cars is so upsetting. This is their livelihood and they love these horses! *Niamh Douglas*

Upgrade

Demarest, N.J.: I wholeheartedly endorse the Elizabeth Forel/Susan Wagner opinion ("Put these steeds out to pasture," op-ed, Aug. 24) that electric carriages should replace horse-drawn carriages. As noted in their piece, electric carriages would greatly expand the range of travel, affording visitors and residents the opportunity to explore other neighborhoods not customarily frequented and observe the character and charm they possess. A motorized carriage can operate in virtually any weather condition whereas horses cannot go out on those very hot, muggy days or those extremely frigid winter days. We would not be in uncharted waters as there is adequate precedent for the electric carriage. I reside in New Jersey, just eight miles from the George Washington Bridge. I spend a good deal of time in New York City patronizing its restaurants, museums, theaters and stores. I firmly believe that tastefully designed carriages will be a welcomed, sophisticated and attractive addition to our wonderful city. *Ronny Siegal*

Horse hysteria

Green Lane, Pa.: Why does the Daily News print all those anti-carriage letters? Not one of those people knows what they are talking about. They just keep repeating the same old lies. They cried cruelty when a

horse suffered from an ailment that was exacerbated by standing on a sloped road that their activism mandated. They cry abuse if a horse trips and falls, or has a visible antibiotic covering a small wound. They scream about horses working in high or low temperatures that humans are expected to work in. They forget that horses are mortal and sometimes die unexpectedly — just like people. Their solutions all involve sending the horses to some mythical sanctuary where they will do nothing for the rest of their lives but eat and poop, and the money to care for them will always be there. *Barbara Steever*

Anachronistic

Cold Spring, N.Y.: We agree heartily with Susan Wagner and Elizabeth Forel's views. Let's stop the archaic practice of forcing horses to pull carriages in the middle of metropolitan traffic. New York is a formidable leader in the world for so many things — why not add the use of electric horseless carriages to this list? *Barbara and Guy Lester*

Check the regulations

Manhattan: It's very simple. Do you actually believe the greatest city in the world, run by Mayor de Blasio, a passionate foe of the carriage horses, would license a business that abused horses constantly? These endless diatribes against the carriage horse business and calls for a ban have failed time after time. Why? Because there is no abuse. Like I said: It's very simple. *Olga Humphrey*

Monday, August 30, 2021:

The right choice

Manhattan: I am 100% in support of the article written by Elizabeth Forel and Susan Wagner on transitioning to e-carriages in NYC ("Put these steeds out to pasture," op-ed, Aug. 24). It will be a crucial decision for Eric Adams as mayor. He will be able to put the long-standing and divisive issue of horse cruelty to rest and support this new initiative. NYC is in need of innovative and exciting new ideas. This is a huge opportunity to phase out the dangerous horse carriages. These beautiful animals do not belong in the middle of Manhattan — or any urban area. If NYC and union workers do not adapt and think about the future, we all suffer. The e-carriages can work longer hours in any type of weather. There is no animal care involved. This is a win/win for the city, the drivers and all animal advocates. *Georgia Spogli*

A likely story

Charleston, S.C.: Once again, the myths and propaganda are seemingly on full display in "Long live NYC's carriage horses" (op-ed, Aug. 24). Look again. A healthy skepticism may be called for. Horses love to work? Yeah, under humane conditions. We don't think dodging snarled traffic on steamy asphalt, breathing exhaust fumes, living in city stables (have you seen them?) are conditions you or I have in mind when we think of ideal working/living conditions for horses. If it weren't for you, they'd be sent to slaughter? Really? Where do your horses go when you are finished with them? Oh, gee, I almost forgot: to bucolic farms where they live happily ever after. Hmm, readers — swallow hard. *Ellen Harley, Charleston Carriage Horse Advocates*

Their suffering is real

Gearhart, Ore.: As someone who has raised and rescued horses for more than 40 years, I have seen the intolerable abuse of these magnificent creatures for profit. Equines are America's heritage. The path to our success, progress and victories are strewn with the bones of the horse! Please, give New York City's carriage horses the compassion, respect and freedom they deserve. Go electric now! Respectfully and with anticipation that New York City will rise to the occasion, as you always do — set an example for the rest of this country and free these kind, loving and giving animals! *Robin Richardson*