

# In Pursuit of a Better Tomorrow

Paws for Life & Mid-Atlantic Horse Rescue

By PAIGE HOWARD 🐾 PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM GRAHAM





Founder of the Mid-Atlantic Horse Rescue and Paws For Life, Virginia "Ginny" Suarez jokes that she was bred to it. Her grandmother, the late Allaire du Pont, a renowned animal lover, founded her local SPCA and co-founded the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation.

Following in her grandmother's footsteps, Suarez spends her days helping dogs and horses find a new lease on life.

Dismayed by the common practice of overcrowded shelters putting down dogs that could have made wonderful pets,

Suarez founded Paws For Life more than a decade ago. "We started small, saving just three or four dogs at a time and finding them homes," she says. Since then, Paws For Life has saved hundreds of at-risk dogs from shelters.

"Every dog has a story, a life, a personality ... take them out of a stressful place and the real dog comes out," says Suarez. "When I get a call saying, 'thank you so much for our dog ... he fits into our family so well ...' that makes it all worthwhile." Suarez works with area animal shelters and

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More recently, Suarez founded the Mid-Atlantic Horse Rescue to save ex-racehorses from slaughter. She had talked about starting a horse rescue with friend Bev Strauss, when she received an auspicious phone call. It was Strauss calling from New Holland (a horse auction where many ex-racehorses end up once they stop winning races) and said there was a pen full of nice thoroughbreds just off the track, bound for slaughter. That day they saved several thoroughbreds and the Mid-Atlantic Horse Rescue was born.

Since then, they have saved over two hundred horses and placed them into new homes where they are loved and enjoyed for showing, eventing and fox hunting. "The only thing these horses can't do is win a race. They can go on to do great things and lead very useful lives," says Strauss, the charity's executive director.

"It's really satisfying when one of our horses gets adopted and becomes someone's horse of a lifetime," says Suarez. Suarez regularly hunts her own horse, Shadow, one of the ex-racehorses she has saved. To see some of the beautiful thoroughbreds ready to start new lives and careers visit: [midatlantichorserescue.com](http://midatlantichorserescue.com). □

*How you  
can help:*



Donations to Paws For Life and Mid-Atlantic Horse Rescue are tax deductible. For more information, call 302.376.PAWS.