

GANDUL – NATIONAL MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPER

Title: The Country of Happy Horses

Type of article: Feature report

Length: Half a page (3,679 characters – 650 words)

Photos: Four photos

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Published on the 22nd of April, 2006

An image of a skinny horse, with sad eyes, like a cat taken out of water. The image of a heavy-hearted horse is something that the British can't stand. In Great Britain, people who love this noble animal are drawing big money out of their own pockets and offer donations to ILPH – The International League for Horse Protection. The League has activists who travel all over the world in order to get horses out of misery. They have been in Mexico, Salvador, Honduras, Fiji, Kenya, Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan, and Ukraine. Now, they have dismounted in Romania, with a budget of one million pounds.

There is no doubt that the Romanians have been also riding horses for a long time, but the League has sent to Romania only "professors": Andre Bubear – former saddler master in the Metropolitan Police, John Perrin – former harness maker in the Cavalry Regiment, chief-farrier in the London Police, as well as citizen of honor of London. Obviously, all of them are very calm and they talk with the confidence given to them by hundreds of years of tradition. Their program will last for five years. They have already built up the first group of "students": 20 men from seven Romanian counties. Some of the students have professions which are not related to horses. They will start to learn the ABC book of the English saddler's and farrier's. For three weeks the students will have no other concerns, for the school, the housing and the food are provided by the League. The British started by teaching the Romanian students some notions of anatomy. The teachers explained to the group of handicraftsmen what a lighter saddle means to the horse. They also explained the importance of a saddle made of soft leather, carefully sewed, the importance of a clean hoof, or the importance of a horseshoe fixed while speaking gently to the horse.

Last year, Andre visited many market places and saw the way the harnesses were manufactured. He says the market is full of products manufactured for the only purpose of being sold. On the other hand, he discovered some talented saddlers. Some of those saddlers were invited to the courses. Andre met Zaharie Hurducaci, who lives near Reghin. People say that Hurducaci is the best saddler in the Ardeal region. Hurducaci has sent his 19 year old son to the courses. The young man has been poking his nose into his father's workshop ever since he started to walk.

John Perrin is proud of his students. Some of them are quite gifted, taking into account that they have never dreamt of sewing belts. He taught them how to handle the tools pleasantly, without effort. For this is the key to success.

A few days ago, one of the groups made the first demonstration. With the tools received from the British, the students applied everything they learned, planning to shoe all the horses in Roteni village, Mures county. It's hard to describe the way the old villagers stared at the foot of the horse placed on a tripod, getting ready for "chiroprody". But the British were even more shocked, when they found out that in Romania a horseshoe is placed every six or nine month instead of six or eight weeks as it should be. Taking care of a hoof is an entire philosophy. The outgrowths must be cut until the hoof gets the form that one sees in the movies. The hoof must be cleaned of mud, it must be filed and, finally, shoed. Meanwhile, the horse owner should comfort his animal. It's difficult to explain everything to a whole village left in awe. In time, after the "students" – as the British call them- have attended the courses, one or two of them will hopefully be able to pass their knowledge to other people. Until then, says Andre Bubear, the students will return to their homes and explain to everyone that even a minor trouble will diminish the efficiency of a horse. "In Romania there is a horse raising tradition. People understand and love horses. They can be taught how to take care of their animals", says Bubear.

The project is in its opening stages. In the future there will be courses of veterinary medicine, nutrition, horse rehabilitation, and many university conferences. The British estimate that their Romanian project will give them a hard time. But they know their mission very well: to make every horse happy.