

made a decision that they would search for Idaho for one year and then try to pick up the pieces and resume their lives. Fifty-one weeks later, the Metcalfes were able to get back on with their lives when Idaho came home, but it wasn't the life they expected.

Her Way of Fighting Back

THE FIRST TIME THE METCALFES LAID eyes on Idaho after her theft, they saw a broken horse. Her stride was slow and her head and tail hung low. But it only took one familiar whistle from Harold to bring the mare to full attention, seeking him out. At that moment, Debi saw her husband begin to heal, and she knew that once Idaho was home, they could resume their lives.

However, the Metcalfes' ordeal was far from over. Not only did they have to endure the trial of Idaho's thief, they had to answer all the e-mails from well-wishers and curious horse owners. But more importantly,

Debi found herself replying to e-mails from victims of horse theft from all over the country. These people wanted her help!

Exhausted from the 51-week search, but exuberant from the joy of bringing Idaho home, **Debi did the only thing she could. She began responding to the e-mails and helping others.**

Quickly, Debi discovered that this was her way of fighting back at the people that had devastated her world and caused her family such anguish. Before long, Debi - with Harold's blessing - quit her full-time job to form Stolen Horse International. But she was far from alone. Those people that had joined her family's journey now rallied around her and became known as NetPosse, a name given to them by the media during the search for Idaho.

Today, Stolen Horse International (SHI) is incorporated with non-profit status, and it has an international following in not just the equine community, but in law enforcement, as well. Professionals often seek out Debi for tips and advice, and through Debi's diligence and determination, SHI has become the number one resource on the Internet for victims of horse theft. Every horse that is brought home through the NetPosse volunteer network, an Idaho Alert (the horse world's Amber Alert), or a flyer, is one more horse that might not have been recovered if not for SHI.

When we returned to the Metcalfe's home that peaceful July evening, I had the honor of riding Idaho. After watching Debi's quiet confidence as she aptly handled Idaho during our ride, I was amazed at the horse I climbed astride. Gone was the unassuming horse from the pasture or the leisurely paced pleasure mount. In her place was power waiting for a chance to be released. As I gathered the reins and signaled Idaho to move off, I discovered all I needed to know about how this creature survived the bowels of hell that she'd been swept into, and I couldn't help but admire

her strength and courage.

As Debi says, "Never underestimate the power of one." I don't believe, however, even she realizes just how profound this statement is. In only a moment of time spent with Debi, Idaho and her family, I discovered how the theft of one horse had shattered a family's faith; how the spirit of one horse had taught a young girl self-confidence; how the pride of one horse had frustrated hardened criminals; and how the love for one horse had brought a grown man to his knees. But most amazingly, how the power of one horse inspired an international quest to end horse theft.

About the Author:

A native of Alabama, Angela Kirby is a mother, wife, and editor. Horses have long been a passion for her. Naturally artistic, Angela has always enjoyed writing stories and poetry, drawing horses, and designing graphics, but most of her free time now is spent assisting Debi Metcalfe, founder of Stolen Horse International, Inc., on a daily basis.



The author shares a special moment with Idaho, knowing that she will never again underestimate the power of one.

Angela knows too well the effects of horse theft. A victim herself of civil horse theft and criminal tack theft, Angela has a great respect and admiration for Debi's commitment to educating the public about horse theft while aiding victims in the recovery of stolen and missing horses, tack and trailers.

As Angela reflects on her own experiences, she tells others, "Debi is the only person that quit her job in order to help other victims. **Although there are thousands of victims of horse theft, there is only one Debi Metcalfe.**"



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