

Life has always been three things to me - constant changes, diverging paths and unexpected goodbyes. In the first 17 years of my life, I have lived in Switzerland, England, Canada, and now California, always relocating from place to place. I've lived in countless different houses and gone to countless different schools. The word "home" never meant much to me, up until I first visited a small rustic ranch in the Los Gatos Mountains.

In early 2014, I was introduced to the Neigh Savers program by complete accident. I knew little about horses, and for some reason, I desperately wanted to learn more. Following my first visit, I was coached and mentored by Jenny Whitman, Neigh Savers Program Manager, who helped me learn the ropes and showed me the power of the bond between horse and human. Nothing has taught me more about trust and second chances than volunteering with these thoughtful yet energetic thoroughbreds, who will give their all and never stop trying for you. Soon after I began volunteering, my mom Karen Read, a lifelong horsewoman, adopted a lanky 16hh bay mare called Blame Rome. We decided on the barn name Rose, although she was soon pegged with the name "princess" for her love of pristine pine shavings and full-time stall cleaners. She wasn't exactly a big winner at the track, but it definitely didn't take long for her to win over my heart.

Rose fell severely lame in the winter of 2014. Old racing injuries flared up, maybe from navigating the rocky mountain footing. She was unrideable for almost three months, and needed daily hand-walking and icing. My mom and I spent hours at the barn each day, tending to her and giving her lots of love. I think that Rose understood how we were helping her, and in those long, rainy months, she came to realize that we were her family. Her nickers and her nuzzles have never ceased since the day we adopted her, and our bond has only grown stronger. She has

taught me so much about partnership, and I can't imagine what my life would be like if Neigh Savers hadn't introduced us to each other.

As I fill out my university applications and wonder where my adventure will carry me next, I can't help but think about how much these incredible thoroughbreds have impacted me. Volunteering with these amazing horses has given me memories that will last me a lifetime, no matter where in the world I am. Because of them, I have made lifelong friends, helped educate others, and most importantly, I have learned that no act of kindness is too small. Neigh Savers has taken hold of my heart and pulled me into something endlessly rewarding, and I feel so grateful to be apart of an organization that has helped not only revive thoroughbred's lives, but humans too.