

BARBARO

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it comes to animals – that's an everyday thing.

Art studio, three horses, 100-acre farm

In a pair of rubber shoes and a lambs wool jacket, Adele Goodman stepped out on a recent chilly evening to wet down some bran mash for her horses – talking the whole time to the dinner crowd – and then topped each meal with bright-green apple pellets.

Buck stomped his feet impatiently as Prince, the youngest, got his bucket first. Inside a century-old barn, Princess, the only girl, reveled in a hearty pat before dipping her copper-toned head to eat.

Horse Protection Auction

What: More than 300 items will be sold at a fundraising auction for the China Grove-based Horse Protection Society of North Carolina.

When: Saturday. Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.; buffet dinner starts at 7.

Where: The Speedway Club, Lowe's Motor Speedway, U.S. 29, Concord.

Tickets: \$35.

Details: E-mail hps@horseprotection.org.

"Just look at those eyes," Goodman said, stroking the horse and leaning in for a hug. "She is my baby."

Goodman's sweet, soft voice is as country as her living in a tiny white cottage on a 100-acre farm surrounded by barley fields and her two dogs, Dudley and Sadie. Barley blossoms swayed in the breeze as a tabby cat danced along the edge of a field near her one-room studio.

Bright sketches of horses, cats and dogs lean against the shelves in the solar-powered room where she spent about 30 hours over two months carefully capturing the ridges of Barbaro's thick veins, the right shades of his nose and the shine off his neck.

A graduate of East Carolina University, Goodman studied with known artists John Faucett and Leslie Tolles-Hudson. She works full time for Penske Racing, but her true love is art. She focuses on nudes, her pet portraits and horses like her own

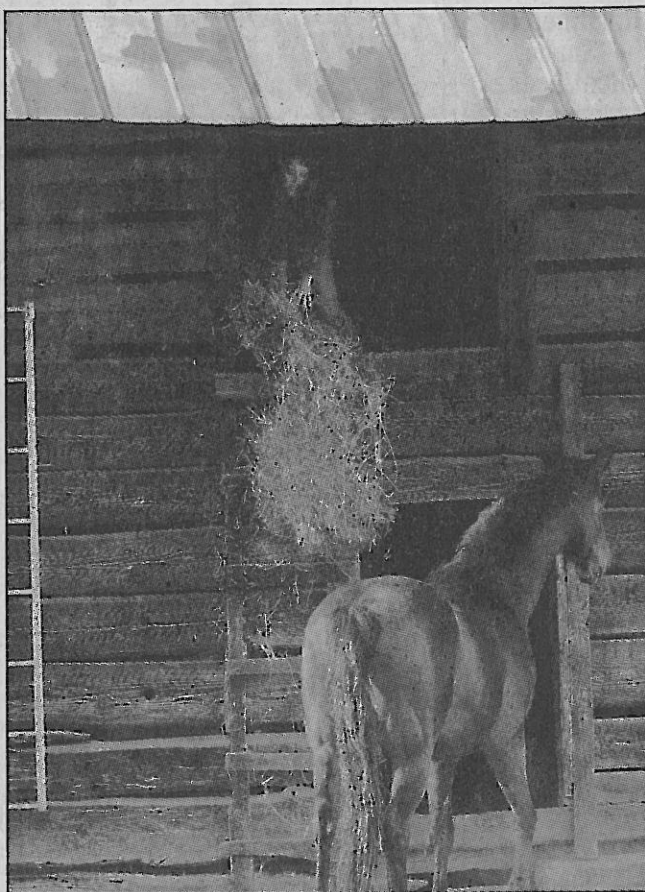
that she connects with through idle conversation.

When she shows up, they give her a horse's version of a purr and whip their tails around.

Goodman had drawn Barbaro's portrait before, after he died. She wanted to memorialize the young horse, who broke his leg at the Preakness Stakes in Maryland, the second leg of thoroughbred racing's Triple Crown. She hung it in her booth at art shows for weeks before sending it to Barbaro's veterinarian as a gift.

But she really didn't learn how special Barbaro was until she began trying to get permission for his portrait to make money for the charity. Permission was a requirement, since he was a licensed race horse.

A good friend of Goodman happened to know Barbaro's owners, Roy and Gretchen Jackson, from college. So she con-



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Adele Goodman throws down hay from the loft for one of three horses she cares for near her Rowan County home.

tacted them, and they gushed about Barbaro's life.

The Jacksons said a 12-year-old boy wrote that he'd kept a scrapbook about Barbaro, and now he knew he was in heaven running around with his father, who had died, she said.

Goodman said her Barbaro portrait is simple. There's no background and only a few details in his upper body.

"I wanted everyone to focus on that perfect little majestic face," she said. "He had these eyes – they were so soulful, so beautiful. I didn't want anything distracting people from him."

Even in death, Barbaro is still moving people, she said. Friends of Barbaro, a fundraising group started by Alex Brown Racing, has raised more than \$1 million and has saved more than 2,500 horses from slaughter.

Locally, the Horse Protection Society maintains a sanctuary for neglected horses to be adopted or retire. The center in China Grove also is available to people who can no longer afford to care for their horses and rehabilitates other horses in need.

"There is something about an innocent animal who is struggling or dying," Goodman said. "I can't get my hands around what it is that touches us so much. It just does."

Victoria Cherrie is a freelance writer.