



Glenwood man under fire for Facebook photos of spraying horse

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A horse trainer from Glenwood is under fire after photos of his work he posted on social media went viral.

The series of photos show a horse on the ground, tied up and eventually covered with a tarp, while someone sprays water on the horse. Equine bloggers referred to the action as “waterboarding.”

No charges have been filed against trainer Logan Allen, though Mills County Sheriff’s Office Chief Deputy Bruce Paulsen said the agency is investigating the claims of abuse. He was unable to comment further.

Allen posted the photos to Facebook over the weekend, which created a chain reaction from horse lovers and horse bloggers throughout the U.S.

“The horse was trying to kick me and got pretty dangerous when I was trying to wash his legs off,” Allen said when reached Wednesday evening. “The only safe way to get him through it was to lay him down. When you lay a horse down, you build trust with him, and you don’t harm it, and it gets back up. You gain trust.”

After he posted the photo, Allen said he started hearing about the anger online.

“I’ve found out that method is a controversial method,” to use on horses, he said.

Allen has since shut down his Facebook account.

While speaking with The Nonpareil, Allen received a call from law enforcement and had to cut the conversation short. A message left later wasn’t immediately returned.

Genea Stoops, of Hooves & Paws Rescue of the Heartland, which rescues horses, among many animals, said Allen reached out to her early Wednesday. She said she brought the horse onto her property.

“Is it a good training method? No. We all agree it’s not – it’s not the way we train,” Stoops said of the photos. “This method will never be used again.”

Stoops said Allen has agreed to take horse-training lessons from her.

“The horse is 3, just recently gelded (castrated). He’s a typical colt, but he’s fearful. He is very spooky,” she said. “This horse might be in good body shape, but, in his mind, he’s terrified. Sometimes it takes a year or two years to take that out of them.

“He’s head shy, but, within 10 minutes, I had him laying his head on me. There’s a difference between harsh training methods and trust training methods.”

Stoops said she’ll work with Allen to make sure he learns how to train properly and will help the horse in any way needed. Hooves & Paws

offered to take the horse in, but Stoops said Allen is currently keeping the horse.

“I explained to him it’s safe here. I said, ‘The horse is not safe with you.’ People on the Internet have said they’re going to steal the horse – that’s not good,” Stoops said.

Stoops said Allen told her he’d received death threats over the photos.

“He’s scared. He admitted he made a mistake,” she said. “He told me he learned those methods from watching videos.”

The photos were shared throughout the country on Facebook, while a number of horse-focused blogs picked up the story. Some online outlets claimed photos depicting “bull baiting” – holding a cow against its will and having dogs attack it – featured Allen as well.

Stoops said Allen told her he shared the photos on his page but that it wasn’t him in the photos.

Two [change.org](https://www.change.org) petitions have been filed on the matter, one calling for the prosecution of Allen and another calling to revoke his 2013 Iowa Horse Fair Colt Starting Challenge award from the Iowa Horse Council.

The Mills County Sheriff’s Office has fielded calls from local residents, along with calls from Maryland, New York, Arizona, California and beyond about the alleged abuse.

“It’s crazy,” Paulsen said. “It’s tying up our com (communication) center.”

Josh Colvin, animal control services manager for the Animal Rescue League, a statewide nonprofit animal shelter, said he’d been contacted about the photos and was monitoring the situation.

“When we’re presented with pictures like that, we encourage investigation,” he said, noting his organization serves as a resource for law enforcement in animal abuse cases. “We want to make sure there is investigation to see if there was a crime committed.”

Colvin said if the actions depicted in the photos were training, “we have to do some research looking at training practices.”

“When does training become abuse?” he said. “There’s a lot of outrage out there, which there should be.”

Stoops – who runs Hooves & Paws with her husband, Bill – said she’ll continue to work with Allen and will be a resource for the trainer.

“We’re a safe haven for people to say, ‘Hey, I’ve made a mistake.’ We have to be that way, otherwise we won’t be able to save any animals. And we won’t be able to educate people, either,” she said. “I told him, ‘This horse is not going to forget what you did to him.’ It’s not over. I explained it to Logan that it’s not over.

“I told him, ‘You’re going to have a lot of explaining to do.’”