

Long Distance Love

Sharing Our Appreciation with Equestrian Caregivers

by Janice Byer



Many people across the country and around the world are helping those on the front lines of this pandemic by providing them with hot meals; RVs to sleep in; words and songs of love and appreciation; changing their regular business production to produce need medical supplies, and so much more. They are on the front end of the physical human health of all Canadians and worldwide.

However, for horse owners/leasers and lovers, our front line workers are the owners, minimal staff & managers of the facilities where our horses are living and being cared for. They are responsible for keeping the horses happy and healthy and we love them for it. But we miss them and the horses terribly so what can we do about it?

First, one small request from the barn owners, managers, etc. (whom we respect dearly):

For barn owners...

1. We know you are seriously busy doing everything yourself right now and that your staff may not be what you are used to, not to mention taking care of your own families, but **would you mind taking a pic or short video of your client's horses and post them on your social media?** I know what you're thinking, "I don't have time for that", and we can respect that but your clients are at home right now missing their ponies so much that they will love you even more if you keep them updated with pics and such. They need some equine therapy right now. Just before feeding time or before they are turned out is usually the best time for a video of all the horses in the barn as most will have their heads sticking out of the stalls 😊 Or, once they are turned out, do a short video of the gang enjoying the fresh air and hay. It only



takes a minute or two to do a pic or video and then you can upload it later when you are in the house and have some time to sit for a few minutes.

2. Or, maybe set up a camera and run a live feed from the barn that your students and clients can look at. You can have it live streaming from your website or Youtube or through other technologies.

That is the only thing we should ask of the barn owners. They have enough on their plate right now

For clients... I hope you are aware of how much your barn owners are doing right now. Most, if not all, of their staff have to stay home with their own families so, for many facilities, it is just the owners doing ALL the work.

1. **Let them know you appreciate them and everything they are doing.** Send them a quick note or text letting them know you are thinking of them and thank them for keeping your horse happy and healthy.
2. **You could also ask them if they need anything delivered to them.** With so much work to do at the farm, and with most essential businesses having restricted hours right now, going to the store for groceries or the feed/farm store for them would be a tremendous help. They can transfer some money to pay for whatever they need (or you can pay for it), you go buy it, then you drop it off outside for them. Be sure to pick up carrots, apples or other treats for them to give to the equines as well 😊
3. If you really want to see your horse that bad (and if you can afford it), **order a security cam online and have it sent to your barn.** Check with the owners first to see if they are willing and have the time to put up the camera and set it up. Discuss with them if a wired or wireless would be best, etc. Then share the link with everyone from the barn so they can see too if they owners agree to put it up.
4. **Share you memories and love for your barn owners & trainers** who are taking care of your equine partner. Go through your archive of photos or buy some new ones online (many photographers have specials on right now) and post them on social media with your words of thanks for everything they are doing. You could do this for your barn friends too.
5. **Drop off a special treat.** Cupcakes; coffee/tea; gift cards; flowers; just something to show them you are thinking of them and appreciate everything they are doing. Be sure to include a card, preferably homemade, and thank them for being there for your horses and keeping them healthy.



Thank you to all the stable owners and staff that are keeping our horses happy and healthy. It may feel like we take you for granted during normal times but believe me, you are the heart and soul of any barn family and we appreciate you more than you can ever imagine.

About the Author

Janice Byer is a horse lover and owner in Southern Ontario. Although her horses are at home now, for many years she had horses boarded at riding facilities so has seen the amount of work that the caretakers of horses have to do. As a professional equine photographer, she sees the love that barn families have for each other at competitions and elsewhere. She feels for them right now and can imagine how much they are all missing each other right now. For more information about Janice, and her equine photography, visit <http://www.lifewithhorses.ca>