

## Woman: Tough call reporting sick horses

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**CANDIA** – Horses or housing. That was the choice Beth Golomb was left with last month when her employers ignored repeated warnings that their horses were in danger.

Last month, she reported unhealthy, underweight and unsheltered horses at the 456 Critchett Road property where she rented from and was employed to care for the horses by the property's owner Brian Travis and his wife Heidi Fredrick.

Two weeks later, the property was raided by Candia police and the New Hampshire Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Fredrick was charged for lack of proper shelter and animal cruelty.

Fredrick has pleaded not guilty to all charges and her trial is scheduled for July 22.

The search and arrest warrants in the case were sealed to protect Golomb's identity but were released to the New Hampshire Union Leader yesterday.

Golomb's name had already made the rounds on Free State Project Web sites after the warrants were released as discovery to Fredrick's defense attorney.

Golomb and Travis are both members of the Free State Project which promotes personal freedom and minimal government involvement in personal issues.

As such, Golomb faced a tough decision when she was unable to convince Fredrick to provide adequate resources to properly care for the horses. But this time, she felt she had no choice, she said.

Her eyes filled with tears as she recounted the difficult decisions that she made.

"I really tried my hardest not to go this route. I made attempts, the horse community made attempts and it fell on deaf ears," Golomb said. "I did this because I wanted what is best for the horses "... I felt like if I didn't stand up and do what I did for these horses, nobody was going to."

Golomb said she watched as donations and help from other local horse people were shunned, including offers of blankets and grain.

As time went on, Golomb and Fredrick's relationship became more difficult and Golomb again started communicating with Travis, who had originally hired her to care for the horses before his wife moved to New Hampshire with him.

In January, Golomb was instructed by Travis to attempt to find new homes for the majority of the 30 horses then residing at the property.

But then Travis stopped responding to e-mails and Golomb watched helpless as some of the horses continued to starve.

Previously, when first considering Travis' offer of caring for the horses in exchange for free rent she thought it would be "awesome" she said.

Her friendship with Travis made it easy to work for him, but once Fredrick came to the state in November, things took a turn for the worse.

"It was hard for me to take care of the horses now that I was not dealing with Brian," Golomb said. "Heidi had a hard time communicating with me."

Golomb repeatedly informed Fredrick that they were low on supplies, that fences needed maintenance and that they needed to make more progress with the construction of shelters.

She said that Fredrick stopped returning e-mails and phone calls and that issues she raised about illness, injury or other problems were ignored.

"The horses did not have enough food and they were starting to wither away," Golomb said, her voice catching. "When I saw the offer of grain turned down, I said something is not right."

At the time, Golomb was keeping her own horse at the farm and worried for his safety. Other horses were breaking into her feed stores and Fredrick had overloaded the paddock where he was kept with other horses.

"I felt it was unfair to keep my horse in those conditions," Golomb said.

Golomb was connected with Joe LeBlanc, owner of Rockin' Horse Ranch in Raymond. She moved her horse to his stable and then started working there to pay for the board.

"I think the breaking point was when I started working here and realizing that these horses are in good condition, are well-kept, get daily care," Golomb said. "I can sleep well knowing my horse is here."

Golomb said she has since been evicted from Travis's property, but she does not regret her decision.

"They (the horses) received the necessary care and treatment they needed to become healthy horses again," Golomb said.

All 12 horses have been returned to Fredrick with stipulations for care