

## **NYTHA's Take the Lead sends veteran to War Horses**

November 8, 2013

When 9-year-old gelding, **System Restore** arrived at Rose Bower with his bag of peppermints from trainer Diane Balsamo on November 6, he became our first retiree from the New York Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association's Take the Lead Racehorse Retirement Program.

Take the Lead began to help non-competitive or retired racehorses from the NYRA tracks – Belmont, Saratoga, and Aqueduct – in 2013. Operations are similar to Parx Racing's Turning For Home, both programs funded in part by the horsemen's groups, which work closely with non-profit programs to help place the retirees in approved homes with new careers.

Very much a war horse, System Restore, a son of Regal Classic earned over \$299,000. Balsamo trained him during his entire 75 race career in New York and most recently at Suffolk Downs.

"I love this horse so much," wrote Balsamo in the note that came with his candy. " He loves his peppermints, and will learn to trust you when he gets to know you. When you meet him, give him a treat."

He got his peppermints AND carrots before settling in for the night after a long trip to Virginia. We will keep everyone up to date on his progress. Plans are to allow him some rehabilitation and let-down time until the spring, when he will be started back under saddle.

War Horses at Rose Bower currently has Green Team, Famous Patriot and Captain Nightcap for Turning For Home, as well as privately donated Camden's Favorite, and owner-sponsored NJ Horse of the Year Hermosillo.