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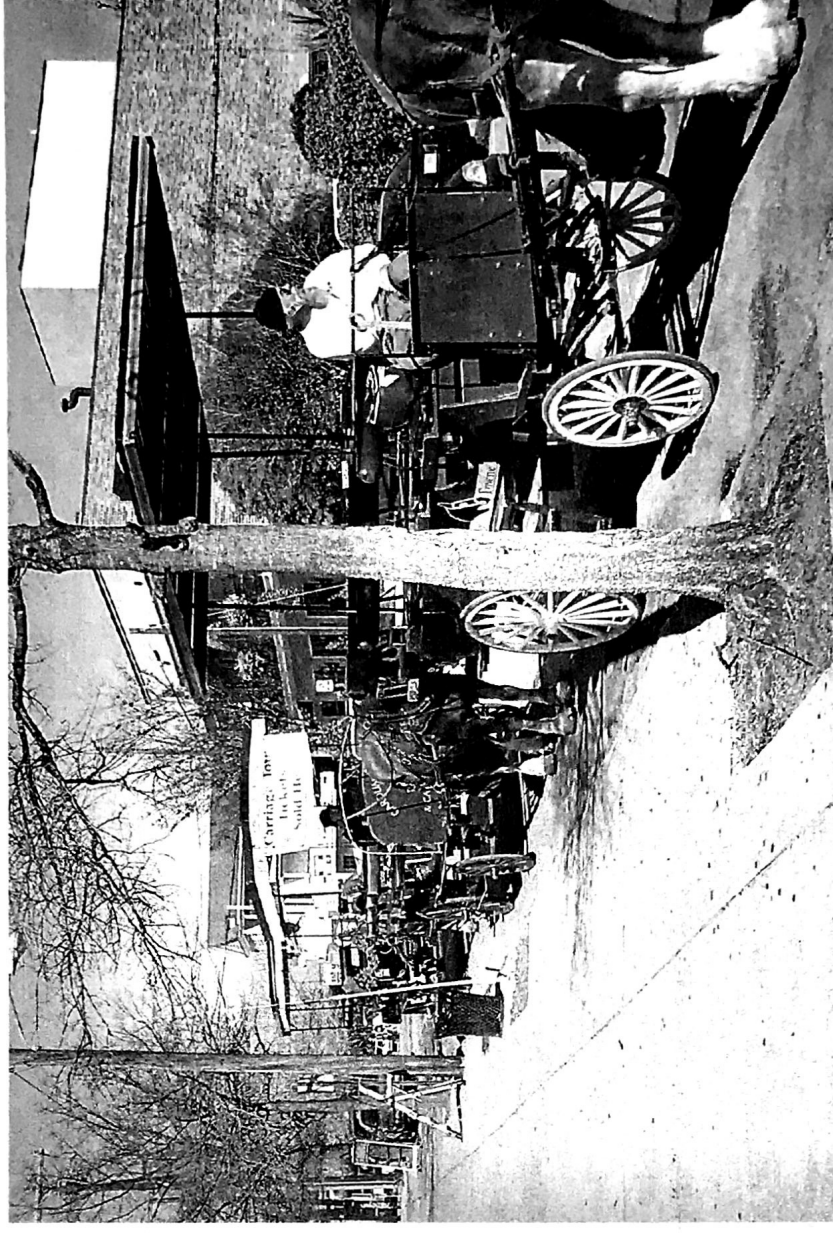
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Debate rages over carriage regulations

PHOTO/LINDSAY DANZELL



An Office of Tourism committee is debating how hot is too hot to trot for the city's working horses and mules.

BY LINDSAY DANZELL
 Contributing Writer

6 Sounds like all they want to do is shut (the carriage industry) down

Since May 2004, six people have debated the welfare of a city full of equines and ultimately the welfare

WILL TOURISM OFFICIALS REIN IN THE CITY'S CARRIAGE INDUSTRY?

City officials face resistance on all sides regarding new regulations proposed for the downtown carriage industry, and the debate is far from over.

Last week, the Tourism Commission's Routes, Parking, and Touring Rules Subcommittee met to discuss new restrictions on the travel of horse-drawn carriages in the city's Historic District. One proposed ordinance would limit the number of carriages transporting passengers between locations, but would not affect those conducting tours.

If the ordinance passes, carriages would be required to reserve a transportation tag, also called a T-tag. No more than eight T-tags would be issued per day, and carriage operators would need to submit a trip manifest to the city's Livability and Tourism Office detailing the route they are to take for each trip. According to the ordinance, "The route must be the most direct route on the least-congested streets," and the tourism manager would have the authority to modify proposed routes to accommodate for traffic flow.

According to those behind the plan, the ordinance is an effort to prevent unnecessary traffic delays in the neighborhoods most affected by carriage travel.

"The city is not getting any bigger, but it's getting so many more people. When you start putting that congestion on top of congestion, it's got to be regulated," says Jane Jilich, member of the Tourism Commission and chair of the Routes, Parking, and Touring Rules Subcommittee.

According to Jilich, officials are placed in the difficult position of finding a compromise between what is best for neighborhoods on the peninsula and carriage operators. With the decision on carriage regulations deferred until their next meeting in December, the subcommittee has little time to decide how to move forward.

"It seems like we can't please everybody. There is no regulation of transportation right now by carriage. They can run all over the streets any time they want to and everything



like that," says Jilich. "Of course, the neighborhoods don't like that. The neighborhoods would like to get rid of them all together, but you can't quite do that in free enterprise either, so you're caught between a rock and a hard place. The neighborhoods want more. The carriage operators want to have free rein."

The subcommittee is also scheduled to discuss a change in the number of carriage tours allowed in certain residential districts on the peninsula and the times during which they are allowed to operate. If approved, the new rules would be implemented on a trial basis for nine months before any final changes become permanent.

"One of the other things that is the most controversial is we want carriages out of residential neighborhoods by 7 p.m. They can stay in the commercial district until 9 p.m., which is the way tours are set up now, so it's already in the ordinance like that. We want to follow the same guidelines. The people who live in those districts do not want a lot of traffic and congestion during those evening hours," says Jilich. "Mayor Riley wants us to do something about it. We know it was a directive from the Tourism Management Plan, so I know that something is going to happen. We're going to pass the ordinances. It's just taking longer than I had hoped."

As the city focuses on the carriage industry's effect on traffic and the quality

of life of downtown residents, Joe Elmore of the Charleston Animal Society says an important factor is being ignored — the well-being of the animals involved.

"We're not against working horse carriages for hire. We're not against long as it's done in a humane working environment and under humane working conditions," says Elmore. "The current practice is not humane, and that's why our interest in it is to ensure the working conditions are humane."

According to Elmore, a thorough regulation of Charleston's carriage industry is needed, and city officials should act before any new regulations are put into place.

"I don't see where any kind of safety hazard analysis was done in coming up with allowing these animal-drawn carriages to operate in the evening when there have been already over the last three years approximately 20 documented incidents where personal property, people were injured," says Elmore. "We have a case right now where someone has a horse and we sent them to two national cruelty faculties and investigators in, and they've raised questions. They say veterinarians need to look at horses right now. ... The system is broken and it needs repairing." —Dust

"We're living it just as everyone else is."

—Pamela Ross of Goose Creek, the ex-wife of Robert Lewis Dear, the man accused of the deadly rampage at a Colorado Springs Planned Parenthood on Saturday, reacting to news about the shooting. Source: *Post and Courier*

\$8.75 millic

The amount Charleston County School District overspent its fiscal year 2015 budget compounded by \$9.36 million in overestimated tax revenue, which leaves the budget with an \$18 million deficit to an internal audit. Source: *Post and Courier*



Horse's autopsy inconclusive

1/4/00

By **ROBERT BEHRE**

Of The Post and Courier staff

An autopsy on the carriage horse that recently died in downtown Charleston found no evidence of abuse, but it also failed to yield a conclusive cause of death, a veterinarian said.

"There's a reason to continue the investigation. We can't hang anything on the medical findings," said John Malark of Edisto Equine Clinic.

On Christmas Eve, a Belgian draft horse named Charlie began limping on his left leg, then collapsed at Queen and State streets. A veterinarian tended the horse for about two hours and then put him down.

Malark said the 15-year-old horse's lungs, liver, intestines and heart were all normal.

"The only thing that was abnormal was skeletal muscle," he said. That damage could have occurred after the horse fell to the ground, or it could be a sign that he suffered from exertional rhabdomyolysis or "tying up," a severe cramping condition that can be fatal in horses.

"There's certainly no evidence of maltreatment or abuse or neglect or any of that sort of thing," Malark said.

A spokesman for the city's animal control division of the police department said Monday the investigation of the incident was on hold pending further information from the veterinarian's report.

Malark said Monday he had not had a chance to share the autopsy results with the city's animal control or with the owners of Carolina Polo and Carriage Co. He said further clues about what happened could be gleaned from talking to the carriage driver and those who cared for the horse.

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The Post and Courier

THE SOUTH'S OLDEST DAILY NEWSPAPER

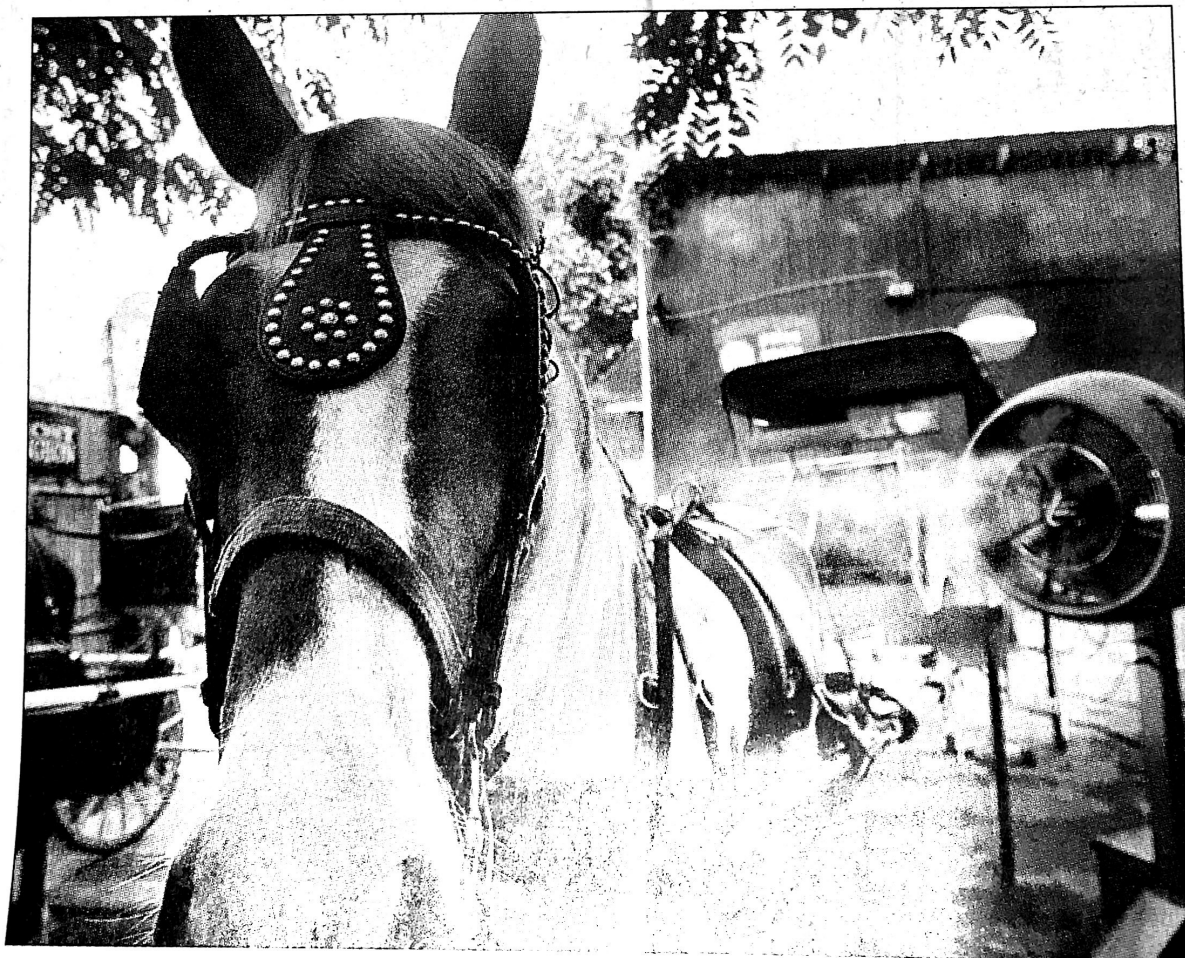
Charleston • North Charleston, S.C.

FRIDAY

Founded 1803

Turning up the heat

A long-running feud over guidelines for Charleston's animal-drawn carriages during summer months has reached a boiling point. Now, amid volleys of vitriolic e-mail, insults and accusations, a special committee struggles to cool things down.



The Post and Courier

City ignoring welfare of horses

As a result of the recently submitted analysis of the carriage industry commissioned by the city administration, the city has finally acknowledged the existence of "myriad problems." The question now is whether the city will at last do more than express disappointment about the problems and instead take serious action to remedy them.

Several years ago, an ad hoc citizens' committee raised and discussed these problems and, after conducting much research at its own expense, vigorously recommended solutions for these very problems in extended meetings with the city's tourism commission.

In producing "stiffer" regulations, however, the city bowed to the carriage industry's opposition. Consequently, the "stiffer" regulations that emerged from those meetings could accurately only be described as spineless in their capitulation to commercial interests and rejection of humane standards for the treatment of animals used by the industry.

Regardless of any superficial interest in the welfare of the animals that these regulations may suggest, the regulations have salient deficiencies: Among them are 1) insufficient trained staff to inspect animals and stables, and therefore no method to monitor compliance; 2) the lack of any penalties for breach of regulations, and therefore no method for enforcement.

Worse, despite appearing as if the recommendations of the citizens' committee had been incorporated in the regulations, those recommendations were diluted and twisted. Municipal oversight of the industry's practices were unchanged.

Among specific examples of the city's effort to maintain the status quo for the benefit of the carriage companies and the city's egregious disregard for the health of the operators'

animals are the following:

1) The citizens' committee sought a regulation that, within three years of its effective date, would require all stalls to be a minimum of 10 feet by 10 feet; in contrast, the "stiffer" regulation adopted by city permits stalls to be 5 feet, 9 inches by 11 feet unless the stable were to move or the company were to undertake remodeling equal to 50 percent of the stable's value.

2) In order to replace subjective and arbitrary regulatory standards, the committee urged that a number of easily determined and objective measures be adopted, including use of the "heat index" (combined temperature and humidity) of the National Weather Service for determining safe working conditions. That would provide for removal of animals from the street when the NWS had announced a heat advisory because the index had reached 105 degrees.

The "stiffer" regulation recognized the utility of the heat index to a limited extent but permitted animals to remain on the street until the city's director of tourism or police department — not the NWS — determined that the index had reached 125 degrees, an exceedingly dangerous heat level.

Since the director of tourism was present at most, if not all, of the meetings between the city and the citizens' committee on these issues, her surprise at the outcome of the impartial analysis is, at best, disingenuous.

The city administration is simply so eager to promote tourism that it is all too willing to ignore the abuse of animals that generate revenue for the city and the carriage industry.

ANNE ROUNDS
Society Street
Charleston

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In Business

Charleston-area leaders
huddle to discuss growth. **7B**

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Thursday, January 10, 2008

On the Web: charleston.net

Section B

Carriage horse makes mad dash

Animal slips bridle; 6 of 13 passengers injured

BY DAVID SLADE
AND KYLE STOCK
The Post and Courier

A carriage horse that slipped its bridle raced down South Battery on Wednesday afternoon, and at least six of the 13 people aboard were injured when the carriage tipped over while turning onto Meeting Street.

"One elderly lady has a shoulder problem. I don't know if it's a broken clavicle or what, but they are X-raying it," said David Compton, owner of Old City Carriage Co. "Hopefully, that's the worst of it." Six people were taken to local hospitals, a Charleston Police Department report stated. By late Wednesday, all had been

treated and released, Compton said.

Carriage driver Jodie Shearer told police that the horse's bridle came loose and fell off, according to the report. She told police the left side of the runaway carriage hit a curb while turning onto Meeting Street, sending the carriage several feet into the air.

The carriage landed on its right rear wheel, which shattered, and then overturned, throwing the tourists to the street and landing on at least one of them, the police report said.

Compton said the accident is the sort of thing that happens "once in a blue moon."

Police filed no charges related to the carriage wreck, which happened at 1:45 p.m.

"I got the call from one of my drivers who was down thatway and he just said 'Send help,'" said Binny Westendorff of Palmetto Carriage Co., another Charleston tour operator.

"I just hate it, because it's just not good publicity," Westendorff said. "I cannot remember the last time this happened, maybe 20 years."

Three tourists were injured in 2001 when two horse-drawn carriages collided, tossing three riders onto Church Street. Police said the horses were spooked at a noisy hotel construction site.

In 2000, a mule spooked by a bicycle broke her bit and pulled a carriage into

Please see **CARRIAGE**, Page 6B



RENEE GERKEN

People try to push a carriage back up after a horse that slipped its bridle and raced down South Battery caused it to tip over while turning onto Meeting Street. At least six of the 13 people aboard were injured.

No surprise

Well, well, no surprise here. Carolina Polo and Carriage Co.'s appeal will allow its animals to continue to work through the busy holiday season with another hearing not set until January. I'll bet the suspension occurs when Charleston's tourist season is at its lowest — say February? Any wagers?

K.H. CHANDLER
Waterway Boulevard
Isle of Palms

Reforms needed

The recent revelation that the official veterinarian for the Humane Society was not included in the review of the incident involving the horse, Blondie, just gives us fuel for the fire.

The opponents of the carriage trade industry are past pushing to abolish it but we are lobbying vehemently for reforms.

KAY CHANDLER
Cove Bay Lane
Mount Pleasant

Lower temperature

So the carriage industry will lower the temperature limit by three degrees and the heat index by 15 degrees.

I'll bet the horses and mules are celebrating and kicking up their hooves in their confined stables.

This is a pitiful adjustment to quiet the Charleston Carriage Horse Advocates and the Charleston Animal Society.

It's not enough. We are the voices for these animals and we are not going away — especially for three degrees.

KAY CHANDLER
Cove Bay Lane
Mount Pleasant

Protect the horses

That the city will take a fresh look at the animals struggling in the carriage trade industry isn't remotely enough.

So an equine specialist visits the stables once or twice a month. Maybe last month, the hottest July on record, the specialist dropped by once? Or was it twice? It doesn't matter what the weight of the passengers is when loading the wagons as long as they pack 'em in.

Come on, Charleston, get behind these wagons and push for serious reforms. These animals are in need of us. We are their only hope.

KAY CHANDLER
Cove Bay Lane
Mount Pleasant

They bolt in New York City, they bolt in Rome, Italy, and they bolt in Charleston. Are these horses trying to send a message?

Articles always address how the passengers fared, but what about the horses' "minor injuries, scratches"? Was a vet called? Who knows? Worst of all, who cares? At least New York City is addressing the carriage industry head-on and the mayor supports the rights of the animals.

By the way, it is not the car-

riage industry in Charleston, but the 17-passenger wagon industry.

Call City Hall and protest when it's 98 degrees and horses are struggling with their overloaded wagons.

KAY CHANDLER
Cove Bay Lane
Mount Pleasant

Beasts of burden

It's going from bad to worse. Now a carriage horse pulling a huge wagon bleeding from his hoof on the streets of our city.

Was there pain? Was a vet called? Or just a farrier? Will Berry join Blondie in the pasture? I'll bet that he'll be out there struggling as soon as the Classic Carriage Works manager deems him fit to pull for profit.

Reform is coming. God willing.

KAY CHANDLER
Cove Bay Lane
Mount Pleasant

LOCAL

The Post and Courier

Carriage horse incidents monitored

By ALI

...ed to the scene. She whipped
...t her phone and posted pho-
...on social media, including
...Facebook page of a recently
...med group called Charles-
...Carriage Horse Advocates.
...There is a group of us who
...increasingly concerned
...out the humane treatment
...these carriage animals," she
...d.

...he horse, named Chief, was
...cked by traffic that had been
...pped at King and Queen
...ets because of a parade and
...pped back as bagpipes ap-
...ached. Chief was not hurt,
...d the driver was released
...m a hospital after being

