



Groups will work together to minimize impact to horses at neighbouring stable

By [Heather Rivers](#), [Woodstock Sentinel-Review](#)

Thursday, July 6, 2017 9:47:59 EDT AM



According to Norwich Township no laws will be broken when cannons blast off three times a day during a two-day event hosted by the South Norwich Historical Society this fall.

Norwich Township clerk Kyle Kruger said notice of the times of the cannon blasts will be supplied to a tenant of a neighbouring property of the location where the Otterville Civil War Re-enactment event has taken place for the last 15 years.

“There are no laws being broken as far as we are aware,” Kruger said. “There will be advance notice of the times the cannon fire will occur. It’s a matter of having good communication with the tenant.”

But Mary Howe owner of SonFlower Stables, whose stables her 12 horses on an adjacent property, said last year the noise of the cannons caused physical and emotional injuries to the horses, which are used as therapy animals.

“I’m sad we can’t work as a community (to find a solution) because we are a healing community,” Howe said.

Howe is a grief resolutions edu-therapy specialist who facilitates equine-assisted learning to help people address the root of emotional issues.

Last fall, she said she received no notice of the re-enactment event, which takes place this year on Sept. 15 and 16.

“To be fair, for fifteen years they have never had to notify anyone,” she said.

But the cannon fire caused one of her therapy horses named Maisie to become so upset she panicked in her stall and her leg had to be bandaged.

Another horse named Maggie is “still traumatized today.”

“When the horses hear rain and thunder they go into hysterics,” she said.

This year Howe said she has reluctantly agreed to transport her horses, with the assistance of paid helpers who will help hold the animals, to the southern most edge of the property away from cannon fire.

However, she is still concerned she has not been informed of the times of the canon blasts, yet, and worries about last minute changes.

She also suggested the noise may contravene animal welfare laws.

Howe said she plans to host an open house of her own facility on Sept. 16, the last day of the event, so visitors can tour her facilities.

“We want to make lemonade from lemons,” she said.

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