



# TWU LOCAL 100



TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION  
LOCAL 100



**CENTRAL PARK  
HORSE CARRIAGES**



# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE CENTRAL PARK CARRIAGE HORSES



Transport Workers Union Local 100 is proud to now represent the approximately 300 horse-carriage drivers and owners providing scenic tours through Central Park for both tourists and New Yorkers alike.

Local 100 has been a champion for blue-collar bus and subway workers for more than eight decades. In recent years, our ranks have expanded to include employees at Big Bus Tours, New York Waterway, and other companies in the tourism economy.

Local 100 believes strongly in workers' rights and animal welfare. We look forward to discussing how we can possibly work together on such important issues in the future.

## Here are some facts about the Central Park carriage horses and drivers



### LOVED

The Central Park carriage horses are loved. They receive excellent care and treatment. Many of the carriage drivers and stable hands are immigrants raised on farms in their home countries, or first-generation Americans who learned their trade from their parents. They have a unique bond with these magnificent animals, which were bred for centuries to work with people.

The NYC horse-carriage workers are wholeheartedly committed to animal welfare.



### HEALTHY

Carriage horses live long, healthy lives. Every equine veterinarian who has examined the NYC carriage horses has remarked on their good health and care. The American Veterinary Medical Association, the American Association of Equine Practitioners, and the New York State Veterinary Medical Society have all endorsed horse-carriage rides in New York City.

Carriage horses are not stressed by the city. The overwhelming majority of rides are in bucolic

Central Park. A study of cortisol levels in NYC carriage horses by Dr. Joe Bertone of Western University concluded they have exceptionally low levels of this stress hormone while working in the city, and they appear to be more stressed while vacationing on the farm.



### VACATIONS and REGULATIONS

Each horse gets at least 5 weeks of vacation on a farm every year. They are subject to some of the most extensive horse regulations in the country, and are overseen by 5 city agencies, including the Department of Health and the NYPD Mounted Police Unit.

Carriage horses can't work in extreme heat or cold. They can't work more than nine hours per day. They must have stalls large enough to turn around and lie down comfortably. They are examined by veterinarians at least four times year: two regularly scheduled exams, and exams before and after their vacations.



### RESCUED

More than 100,000 horses are slaughtered in the United States every year. These horses didn't have anyone capable or willing to take care of them.

Many of the Central Park horses were put up for sale by their previous owners at horse auctions - where they teetered on the edge of a death sentence. The Central Park horse carriage owners and drivers rescued these horses from a horrible fate and have given them a purposeful, happy life. These are domesticated animals that want to interact with people, and they spread joy to tourists from around the world, as well as to everyday New Yorkers.



### POLITICS AND REAL ESTATE

There are 68 licensed carriages and more than 100 horses in three stables on the West Side of Manhattan. Each carriage owner essentially is a "mom-and-pop" business. They support hundreds of blue-collar jobs.

The horse-carriage folks have been subject to harmful lies and allegations that they abuse their horses. One group in particular stands out: NYCLASS.

NYCLASS was founded by the real-estate industry and is funded by the real-estate industry. Why? There are three stables on the West Side of Manhattan and that land now is very valuable. Developers would love to get their hands on these properties to build skyscrapers with high-priced apartments and commercial space.

NYCLASS is a smokescreen for an insidious land grab that would put hundreds of blue-collar workers out of work.



### SAFE

Not a single horse has been killed in a traffic accident in the last 15 years - and new regulations enacted in recent years have increased safety further. The city banned cars from Central Park in 2018. More than 2,100 pedestrians, meanwhile, were killed by cars and trucks in the city over the last 15 years.



### UNION

The horse-carriage drivers are represented by Transport Workers Union Local 100, which has been a champion for blue-collar New Yorkers for more than 80 years. TWU Local 100 is comprised of 46,000 men and women who operate and maintain the MTA's bus and subway system; the employees of Big Bus Tours, New York Waterway and Liberty Lines Transit; and several school bus companies in the metropolitan area.

Local 100 is part of TWU of America, "America's Fighting Democratic Union," with more than 150,000 members across the country in the transportation sector.



## Long live NYC's carriage horses

By TONY UTANO and JOHN SAMUELSEN

President of TWU Local 100 and International President of Transport Workers Union of America

Love horses? Treat yourself, or someone you know, to a Central Park horse-carriage ride.

Horses are domesticated animals that thrive when working and interacting with people.

You can see it at the Central Park carriage stands where these gentle giants will lower their heads so children and adults can stroke their soft faces and pat their long necks. You can see it on the carriage paths as these magnificent creatures walk with confidence and grace through the pastoral oasis.

Too many horses face a much grimmer reality. Hundreds of thousands of horses in the United States lack proper food, shelter or exercise because they don't have anyone willing or financially able to care for them. More than 100,000 are slaughtered annually.

New York City's carriage horses, on the other hand, have a purpose — a sustainable job — that generates resources to help pay for their food, shelter and medical care. They've been pulling carriages through the park since the day it opened, providing green tours since 1858.

Most of the carriage horses are draft horses, 1,000-2,000-lbs. animals that have been bred for centuries to plow fields, haul goods and transport people. They are genetically hardwired, mentally and physically, for exactly these activities. Providing a handful of rides a day is not a cruel demand of them. Quite the opposite: It keeps them in good shape and spirits.

Today, the Central Park carriage horses and drivers are subject to the most extensive carriage industry regulations in the entire country. They are enforced by five agencies, including the city's Health Department and the NYPD. There is a

constant and multi-faceted effort to ensure these majestic animals are healthy and content. The rules include:

- At least five weeks of vacation on a farm per year. Many spend many months every year in pastures.
- At least two veterinary exams per year.
- No work during extremely cold or hot weather.
- Stationary horses must be blanketed when it's 40-degrees or colder. Routine vaccinations, dental and medical care.
- Hoof trimmings/new shoes every four to six weeks.
- Large stable stalls so horses can easily turn around and lay down.

Central Park's blue-collar carriage drivers, groomers and stable workers joined Transport Workers Union Local 100 in October. Many are immigrants or children of immigrants who have worked and cared for horses their entire lives. They are horse lovers trying to make a living in our extremely expensive city.

TWU Local 100 is committed to ensuring the horses receive excellent care — just as much as we are committed to helping carriage workers provide for themselves and their families. These are not mutually exclusive goals. They go hand in hand. There is a special bond between horses and people. Part of the carriage drivers' mission, as we see it, is to enable city residents — who have little or no connections to the natural world — to experience these beautiful animals up close and personal.



A beloved tradition. (Mark Lennihan/AP)

In March, TWU brought nearly 24 children, parents and staffers from a Brooklyn homeless shelter to meet, pet and feed the horses. The group learned about the horses from carriage drivers, and then rode like royalty through the park. In May, we hosted nearly 20 students from a Bronx middle school.

"It was amazing," Tanveer Ahmed, 12, said. "The horse going a good speed, the wind hitting your face, the fresh air." Jade Mitre, 13, called the outing an "extraordinary, once-in-a-lifetime experience." Such experiences wouldn't happen if advocates, including an organization called NYCLASS, get their way.

# BRONX SCHOOL KIDS MEET THE CENTRAL PARK HORSES – AND GET FREE RIDES

“ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME EXPERIENCE”

Nearly 20 Bronx eighth graders were treated at the first TWU Local 100 “Meet A Horse Day” in Central Park in May 2021.

The teens were able to pet and feed carrots to the beloved horses, learn about the animals from a carriage driver, and take free rides through the park, courtesy of the union.

“Horse carriage rides through Central Park date back to the opening of the park in 1858, and they are enjoyed by tourists from around the world,” TWU Local 100 President Tony Utano said. “We want to share that experience with city kids who might not otherwise get the opportunity.”

For more than a half hour, Carriage Driver Christina Hansen gave a “Horses 101” lesson to the students from William Niles School MS 118 in the Tremont section of the Bronx. Her lesson touched on everything from their history with humans (they were domesticated to live and work alongside people 6,000 years ago) to their physical attributes (they weigh more than 1,000 pounds) to their life in the city (they are stabled on the West Side, have the same veterinarian as the NYPD Mounted Police, and get a minimum 5 weeks of vacation on a farm).

The kids then broke up into groups and toured Central Park in the horse-drawn carriages.

“It was amazing,” Tanveer Ahmed, 12, said. “The horse going a good speed, the wind hitting your face, the fresh air.”

Jade Mitre, 13, called the outing an “extraordinary, once-in-a-lifetime experience.”

Lianne Annan, 13, said the horses were “friendly and welcoming...and cute!”

There are 68 licensed CP horse-carriages and a couple hundred drivers. Most are immigrants, or children of immigrants, hailing from countries all over the world, including Ireland, Italy, Israel, Turkey, Mexico, Russia, Egypt and El Salvador. They are members of TWU Local 100, which has more than 40,000 members, the majority of whom operate and maintain the MTA’s bus and subway system.



# HOMELESS SHELTER KIDS AND PARENTS RIDE LIKE ROYALTY IN HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGES THROUGH CENTRAL PARK



Nearly two dozen children, parents, and staff from a Brooklyn shelter were treated to free horse-carriage rides in Central Park, courtesy of TWU Local 100 and the drivers.

The children also were able to feed carrots to the horses, pet the magnificent animals, and learn a little about the historic horse-carriage industry from the men and women who provide tours through the park for a living.

“It was excellent experience,” SCO Family Services Childcare Director Denise Watkins said of the March 22nd outing. “The children enjoyed it thoroughly. This was a real treat for them and an experience they will never forget.”

Carriage drivers have been providing tours of the park for more than 160

years. Many of the trips are provided to tourists visiting from other cities or countries, or to New Yorkers celebrating special occasions like weddings and anniversaries.

Carriage driver Christina Hansen said the drivers were happy to have the kids from Brooklyn on board.

“Kids love horses and as New Yorkers they should get to experience NYC’s most famous horses up close and personal,” Hansen said. “Access to horses shouldn’t be limited only to those with disposable income, or the ability and time to travel. Our horses are part of the community, whether or not one has the means to pay for their labor.”

The Central Park carriage drivers have been under siege from City Hall and animal rights extremist throughout the

de Blasio administration. They joined Local 100 last year to better defend their livelihood.

TWU Local 100 has an ongoing relationship with the Bushwick shelter. TA Surface officers and members at the Grand Ave. Depot raise funds to purchase backpacks, notebooks, and other school supplies for shelter kids in an annual charity event organized by Depot Chairman Clarence Paterson and TA Surface Vice President JP Patafio. Paterson and Patafio helped organize the free carriage rides along with Organizing Director Frank McCann.

“It was a great day,” Patafio said. “This is part of us building that relationship between the union, the public and the community, and making sure it’s tight. At the end of the day, we’re family.”

# EXCLUSIVE: New York City carriage horses are stress-free even after long day of trotting, academic says

By JENNIFER FERMINO  
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

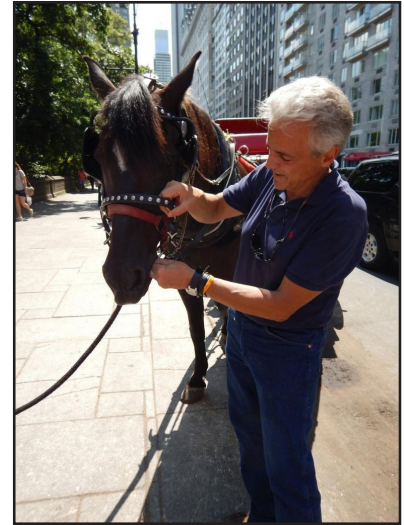
DAILY NEWS

APR 08, 2015 AT 10:01 AM

## You're probably more stressed than a New York City carriage horse, according to a new study.

A California academic who specializes in equine medicine conducted an intensive study of stress levels on Big Apple carriage horses and found them completely angst-free — even after a long day trotting in Central Park.

Joe Bertone, who teaches at Western University of Health Sciences, said he became intrigued with the carriage-horse debate after visiting New York several years ago. “Vets I know and respected were telling me (the horses) were having a pretty darn good life, but I wanted to put some science behind it,” he said.



In a study sponsored by the horse-carriage industry, which provided a \$5,000 grant, he and his team analyzed the levels of cortisol — a hormone produced during stress in humans and animals — in 13 carriage horses at the Clinton Park Stables on W. 52nd St. over a three-day period in August. The animals were examined four times a day — mostly by taking saliva samples and checking their body temps — including right before they left for work and right after they got home. “I couldn’t find more content animals,” said Bertone, who is board-certified in internal medicine for large animals, with a specialty in horses. “They were very relaxed.”

Ironically, Bertone did find some signs of stress in carriage horses — but only when they got out of town. He sent one of his students to Pennsylvania to check on carriage horses on their five-week furlough, which the city requires as a rest for the animals. Some of those horses had elevated cortisol levels, possibly because they were in an unfamiliar environment, according to Bertone.

Bertone said he came up with the idea for the study himself. “My No. 1 concern is animal welfare,” he said. The research was presented at the Interdisciplinary Forum for Applied Animal Behavior in Texas in February, and will be featured at several other science gatherings this year.

It remains to be seen if it can influence the horse-carriage debate here in New York. Mayor de Blasio is pressing the City Council to ban the industry. A spokesman said the administration was looking for a “humane and equitable solution that moves the horses off our streets” while protecting jobs. Bertone said he noticed another sign that the horses were happy with city living — their sleep habits. In prior studies, he found horses won’t sleep when they’re stressed, no matter how tired they are. But during his visits to the Clinton Park Stables, “in the mornings, we heard them snoring,” he said.

## Vet: Carriage horses are healthy, happy and well cared for

By DR. MARK JORDAN

Last month, I accepted an open invitation to visit some of the city's carriage horses at the Clinton Park stable.

As the head of an equine veterinary practice in Carmel, Putnam County, I have been examining and treating horses for more than 32 years.

I felt it was my responsibility to investigate the horses' treatment from my own perspective as a veterinarian, horseman and advocate of animal rights.

The purpose of this visit was to evaluate the horses' living conditions as well as their current health.

Before our trip to the city stable, my colleague, Dr. Michelle Singer, and I were both skeptical of the care that these horses were receiving.

But we were pleasantly surprised by what we found.



Media was given a tour today of Clinton Stables on W 52nd Street as they are advocating keeping horse carriages in NYC. Jesus Ramos (left) leading the horse out of the stable.

Contrary to what many may believe about these horses and the environment that they live in, the horses are in good health and are living in an appropriate stable with excellent care.

These horses are being treated with pride and compassion, often by their individual owners/drivers. These horsemen provide care for these horses on a daily basis.

On the days the horses do not provide carriage rides in Central Park, they are hand-walked to make sure they are out of the stall and exercised every day.

Contrary to my preconceived thoughts, these horses do not live in straight stalls in which they are unable to move or lie down.

Instead, the horses were housed in comfortable, clean, spacious box stalls, which allowed them to lie down in comfortable dry bedding.

The box stalls are also large enough to allow the horses to move freely. The horses are also being provided with quality food and water throughout the day.

After my first visit, I returned unannounced to talk with management and personal horse owners to better understand their perspective. Upon arriving, I still found the stables to be in the same good conditions that I had observed in the initial visit.

During this second visit, after the stable inspection, I observed some of the horses arriving back from the park and other horses being hitched up to go out to the park.



Dr. Mark Jordan is a horse owner and the head of an equine veterinary practice in Carmel, Putnam County.

The horses did not appear at all overworked upon their return, and the outgoing horses were ready to take their shift.

Next, we proceeded to the south end of the park to see the horses firsthand on the job. The horses at Central Park all were in good weight, well shod, and prepared for their carriage work that day.

After much investigation, it was clear to me these horses are living happy lives with owners who truly care for their well-being. These owners/drivers are proud of their animals and provide them with excellent care on a daily basis.

I strongly support the continuation of these carriage horses in New York City as an equine veterinarian, long-time horse owner and horseman. These horses are being loved and cared for earnestly and deserve the right to continue on as a historic tradition of the city.

*Dr. Mark Jordan is a doctor of veterinary medicine who works at the Mid-Hudson Veterinary Practice in Carmel.*



# The New York Times

## Carriage Horses I Inspected Were Healthy and Content



[Harry W. Werner](#), a past president of the American Association of Equine Practitioners, owns Werner Equine in North Granby, Conn.

**Updated** January 17, 2014, 5:44 PM

In February 2010, I visited four carriage horse stables in New York City at the invitation of a member of the Carriage Operators of North America. I was accompanied by an experienced equine surgeon, as well as a veterinarian who is an horsewoman with a special interest in animal behavior.

Given free access to all areas of the stables and to the horses' veterinary records, we reviewed the husbandry, veterinary care and farrier care the horses received. Our daylong inspection ended with a carriage ride through Central Park, which enabled us to inspect the horses at work. The American Association of Equine Practitioners paid all expenses associated with our visit, and we were not compensated by the carriage industry.

On a visit paid for by the American Association of Equine Practitioners, I was impressed by the conditions of the stables and animals.

I was impressed by the cleanliness of the horses' housing and the ample bedding in their stalls. While stall size varied, even the smaller stalls provided adequate room for the horses to stand, lie down and move about comfortably. Fire prevention was clearly a priority at the stables. Sprinkler systems, extinguishers and other fire emergency response equipment were present and clearly marked. All access and exit corridors were clear, clean, padded and of ample dimensions to facilitate safe passage by horses and handlers. Hay and grain quality was excellent and foodstuffs were stored in a manner that was secure from pests. Water was fresh and available freely to the horses.

The quality of the farrier care provided for the horses was excellent. In the few cases where hoof condition had required therapeutic farriery, the care had been competently performed. All horses had up to date and complete veterinary care records which detailed wellness care and treatments for sickness or injury. The physical condition of all of the horses I observed was very good. I saw no evidence of inadequate nutrition or signs of injury or disease.

We paid particular attention to the demeanor and behavior of the horses. We three visiting veterinarians brought nearly a century of experience working with horses on a daily basis – often tending to animals in pain. The carriage horses were calm and displayed behavior that reflected

# The New York Times

## Keep the Carriage Horses

By The Editorial Board

April 13, 2014

Mayor Bill de Blasio noted his 100th day in office last week with a big speech and a proud recitation of campaign promises kept: universal prekindergarten, an end to unconstitutional policing, paid sick leave, among other things. There is one prominent pledge he would do better to break.

Mr. de Blasio ran on a vow to abolish, in his first days in office, the horse-drawn carriage rides that have been a fixture for generations in and around Central Park. To fulfill that promise to animal-rights activists, his administration is considering sending more than 200 horses to pasture and finding something else for their 300 drivers to do, like possibly shuttling tourists around in antique-style electric cars.

Don't do it, Mr. Mayor. Here's an instance where delay and inaction are the preferable form of leadership. Let the carriages and the horses alone. Let this small business survive. Side with the drivers and do not add fleets of new cars, electric or not, into the streets and parks.

The carriage opponents argue — often vehemently, though with very little evidence — that pulling people around is a terrible fate for a horse and that city living and working the streets are abusive by nature. The owners counter that this slow mode of transportation has a good safety record, considering how few horses have ever been injured or killed in accidents given the tens of thousands of trips taken over the years. They say they treat their horses with love and comply with strict city regulations like five weeks of vacation a year for the horses and other health and safety standards.

While there is no lack of animal-welfare problems in the city — abused pets, feral cats, rats, Asian long-horned beetles, geese at the airports — New York's well-treated, well-regulated carriage horses are not among them. Mr. de Blasio should, by all means, protect the health and well-being of horses, but he has far bigger and better things to do than eliminate the carriage trade.

Besides, there is much room for compromise here, short of abolition. Let the horses work, but maybe just in Central Park, not on the avenues or in Times Square. Find ways for more children and the disabled to get close to them, and for the horses to eat and socialize with one another when they aren't pulling carriages. To get the horses safely to and from their stables on the West Side of Manhattan, block off a lane for them twice a day.

Carriage horses have a place in New York, a working, workaday city. The de Blasio administration should make every effort to ensure that they are safe and protected. They do not need to be banished.



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION

## OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

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## New York's Trade Union Movement Supports the Central Park Horse-Carriage Drivers & Stable Workers

NOVEMBER 23, 2021 -- The blue-collar workers providing Central Park horse-carriage rides – one of the most popular tourist attractions in New York City – are dues paying members of Transport Workers Union Local 100. TWU Local 100, and The Transport Workers Union of America, are committed to protecting these workers' ability to earn a living and support their families in the field of their choice: the historic horse-carriage trade. We are equally committed to supporting and advancing the cause of animal welfare.

The Carriage Drivers and Stable Workers take very good care of their horses under strict regulations enforced by five City agencies, including the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the NYPD. Over the years, these workers have won the support of many, including leading veterinarians who are experts in horse health and welfare; professional veterinary medicine associations, such as the American Association of Equine Practitioners and the New York State Veterinary Medical Association, Equine Rescue Resource, the New York State Horse Council, the New York Daily News Editorial Board, the New York Post Editorial Board, and the New York Times Editorial Board.

The Transport Workers Union has now secured the support of dozens of unions representing hundreds of thousands of workers in New York City. They stand with the horse-carriage Drivers and the Stable Workers in opposition to misguided efforts to ban horses and carriage rides. We look forward to working with you and the City Council on this and other issues of importance to the trade union movement.

**John Samuelsen**  
International President  
Transport Workers Union of America

**Tony Utano**  
President, TWU Local 100  
MTA/NYCT/Private Lines

**NYC Central Labor Council**  
Vincent Alvarez, President

**Heat and Frost Insulators Local 12**  
John Jovic, Business Manager and Financial  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Amalgamated Transit Union Local 726**  
Danny Cassella, President

**The Independent Drivers Guild**  
Brendon Sexton, Executive Director

**Communications Workers of America Local 1180**  
Gloria Middleton, President

**International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees,  
Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts**  
James Claffey, International Vice President  
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**Council of School Supervisors and Administrators**  
Mark F. Cannizzaro, President

**The International Association of Machinists and  
Aerospace Workers, District 15**

Norman Shreve, Directing Business Representative

**International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3**

Chris Erikson, Business Manager

**International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 237**

Gregory Floyd, President

**International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 831**

Harry Nespoli, President

**International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 14-14B**

Edwin Christian, President

**International Union of Operating Engineers**

William Lynn, Business Manager and Financial  
Secretary, Local 30

**International Union of Operating Engineers**

Robert Troeller, President, Local 891

**International Union of Painters and Allied Trades,  
District Council 9**

Joseph Azzopardi, Business Manager/Secretary  
Treasurer

**Laborers International Union of North America,  
Mason Tenders District Council**

Robert Bonanza, Business Manager

**Long Island Federation of Labor**

John Durso, President

**New York State District Council of Ironworkers**

James Mahoney, President

**Plumbers Local Union No. 1**

Michael Apuzzo, Business Manager

**Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union/  
United Food Commercial Workers**

John Durso, Local 333 President

**Service Employees International Union NYC Local 246**

Joseph Colangelo, President

**Sheet Metal Workers International Association, Local 28**

Eric Meslin, President & Business Manager

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**Transport Workers Union Local 225**

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Debra Hagan, President

**Transport Workers Union 570**

Dan Rivera, President

**Transport Workers Union Local 591**

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**United Auto Workers Region 9A**

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