



Pryor Mountain
WILD MUSTANG CENTER

FALL 2018 NEWSLETTER

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1968——Happy 50th Anniversary——2018

2018 marked a milestone year for the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. On September 11, 1968, Stuart Udall signed the papers to declare this as the first public wild horse range in the United States. This decision resulted from the hard work of a group of local citizens who led the charge of preserving the unique population of horses that had roamed free in the mountain range just to the north of Lovell, WY. The community of Lovell honored the 50th Anniversary through the annual Mustang Days celebration theme of “Running with the Mustangs!” It was an exciting challenge to have Pryor Mustangs, Paquita and Renegade in the Mustang Days parade. This was made possible through the effort of Steve Cerroni and Trista Hernandez. During this time, the Mustang Center, the National Park Service, and the BLM joined forces to hold a “Wild Horse Watcher” day out at Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area. Visitors were taken on private tours to observe and learn about the bands of that area. The idea for the day was inspired by an event held by Reverend Floyd Schwieger many years ago. The Lovell Chronicle dedicated their annual Historic Edition to the 50th Anniversary of the Pryor Horse Range. Editor, David Peck, poured through historic newspaper articles to recap those days when the wild horse range was established. Throughout the rest of the summer months, visitors were able to learn more about the history of the horse range and purchase unique items from the gift shop that memorialized this occasion.



Past to Present—Steve Cerroni leads Pryor Mustang, Renegade past the statue in Lovell honoring the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range

Carrying on a Tradition—50th Anniversary Collectible Coins



Heads—Gaelic Princess



In honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range, the Mustang Center created a beautiful antique-gold finished collectible coin. This was not the first coin made for the wild horses. This is actually the third that preserved the heritage of the Pryor horses on a specially designed coin. The first coin was designed by Lovell resident, Edna Stevens, right around 1970.

This coin was designed by Matthew Dillon using photographs taken by his mom, Nancy Cerroni. A mare named Gaelic Princess is featured on the “heads side”. Gaelic Princess is the beautiful daughter of Prince and Ireland. She is now 12 years old and serves as the symbol that we must keep working towards

management decisions that ensure that all mares have at least one offspring to carry on their genetic future. The tails side is a symbol for the future. Two young stallions, Naolin and London rise up in the stallion action we refer to as “the dance.” This playful exuberance of the young prepares them for battles in the future when they move from the bachelor world to the band stallion world. We encourage you to call the Center today and get your own limited edition Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range collectible coin. They serve as an enduring legacy of the first public wild horse range in the United States and the importance of working to ensure the future of these very special horses.



Tails-Naolin & London

2018 on the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range

2018 may go down as the year of the bachelors! There are a large number of young stallions on the mountain and the Dryhead. Lots of bachelors and young stallions means lots of action. The pressure of the young bachelors inevitably brings a changing of the guard with some of the legendary veteran stallions losing out to the young and strong. One such example was with Morning Star's band. The dark bay stallion, Morning Star, was last seen going into the winter of 2017. His close-knit band of mares and filly, Morning Reverie, were kept on the move throughout the summer as it seems, every bachelor stallion both young and old, sought after them. Of these Duke was a strong contender and at the age of 22 showed the enduring heart of a warrior in his quest to gain a band. Blue Moon/Flint was another strong stallion who was challenged and defeated in 2018. Flint's band was split between two lower Sykes stallions, Johan and Chief Joseph. Flint was quite visible as a lone stallion until around mid-July when he disappeared into the mystery of the range.



Young stallions Miocene, Lobo, and Nickle compete for part of Morning Star's band.



"The Greeters" Hickok's band at Crooked Creek Bay

There were similar changes on the Dryhead too. Blizzard seemed content to slide into the bachelor stallion world. Younger stallions, Hidalgo and Hidatsa joined that lifestyle too. Each became quite elusive with rare sightings in the Dryhead and lower Sykes. Other Dryhead horses were quite visible through the summer which gives visitors to Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area an added bonus. Visitors are often greeted by Hickok's band at the entrance to the Wild Horse Range. The bay stallion has a large group right now with lots of color and a variety of ages from young to old. They are the lucky ones with that water source. For the most part, the Dryhead area is hot, harsh desert environment and it doesn't seem possible that the horses can find enough to eat or drink. But they do survive as they have in the area for many, many years.

Once again, there was another small group of foals with only 12 known births in 2018. However, we watched as four of them died. Foal mortality is typical, but is still a hard part of nature to watch. It is notable though that the foals born in the harshest of seasons and circumstances survived. This shows the grit of the mustang. There is an old phrase still used in the West, "You've got sand." This holds true for many mustangs, in particular Ruby and Sorcerer, both born in the 2017-18 winter who are still thriving.



Ruby was the last foal of 2017. Born in November, she was a tough little horse that made it to her first birthday about the time this photo was taken.



Sorcerer was the 1st foal of 2018. Born in February, he had a tough start in life, but looked strong on this day in November.



Pryor stallion, Johnston, eating sage

Moving into Winter: The horses spent much of late summer and fall putting on body weight for the winter. For the most part, they look good and ready to end out the 2018 year on the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. At this time of the year, the horses move into the lower elevations to escape the cover of snow on their food sources. Wild horses have learned the benefits of eating sagebrush and greasewood. Both are very abundant and provides a good amount of protein and certain minerals into the horses' diets. Water becomes a challenge as many of the water sources begin to freeze. It is another sign of their amazing resiliency that the wild horses have learned to eat snow to stay hydrated.

Herd Demographics: Each year the Mustang Center monitors the wild horses and keeps track of the population. This information is maintained on a horse list and updated on a regular basis. For the past four years the population has remained very stable which shows a balance between birth and death rates. One thing to note is there are 17 horses 20 years and older. Of these, only 4 are stallions. It is a tough life for stallions especially as they get older. The oldest stallions right now are Baja and Duke, both at age 22. We are seeing mares living longer because with the fertility control, they are not having the stress of continued foaling. The oldest mare on the mountain is Phoenix, Cloud's mom, who is looking great at her advanced age of 27.

November 2018 Herd Population			
Age Range	Female	Male	Total
Total Horses	92	70	162
Over 10	47	24	71
1-10	43	40	83
2018 Foals	5	3	8

For up-to-date information on the Pryor Mountain Wild Horses follow us our Website: www.pryormustgangs.org
We also maintain two Facebook pages: [Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Center](#) & [Pryor Mustangs: Beyond the Range](#)

Management of the Herd: Mustang Center Files an IBLA Appeal

The saying, "History repeats itself" is appropriate for 2018. Fifty years ago, the community of Lovell challenged the BLM in an attempt to protect the wild horses of the Pryor Mountains. In 2018, the Mustang Center once again made an attempt to challenge a BLM decision that affected the long-term survival of the herd. In last year's Fall newsletter, it was reported that the BLM began the management process through the "Capture and Removal of Excess Wild Horses and Continued Fertility Control in the Pryor Mountain Wild Horses." This turned out to be a long drawn out process with the decision record issued in August 2018. The plan was for the BLM to remove 17 horses and modify the fertility control plan. For the first time, the Mustang Center opposed the proposed decisions and chose to file a petition for a stay and an appeal through the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA). The appeal was filed due to numerous errors in the plan, most specifically in the horses selected for gather and removal. In addition to our appeal, the Cloud Foundation filed a lawsuit and stopped the gather through a Temporary Restraining Order. The BLM-Billings Field Office requested an action called a "Motion for a Remand." They wanted the control of their Decision Record back from the IBLA with the intention of withdrawing the plan for a gather and modification of the fertility control plan. The Mustang Center made a request to the IBLA to deny the BLM's motion as an attempt to allow the proposed changes in the fertility control plan to be implemented in 2019. However, the IBLA ruled in favor of the BLM and granted the motion for a remand.



Quahneah is the last offspring on the range of mare, Washakie, and stallion, Baja. She was slated for removal. Fortunately, she was not removed and in time may carry on her parent's

What's Next? At this point, it is another time to "wait and see." The BLM has withdrawn the current plan. Until then, the existing plans from the 2009 Herd Management Area Plan and the 2015 Fertility Control plan will continue. The BLM will begin working on a series of management tasks. At some point, they will once again issue a Scoping Notice to begin the process again. We will be watching for any direction that the BLM takes regarding management and be prepared to utilize our strong knowledge base of the horses to provide recommendations for any management proposals.

Continuing to Work Towards their Future...

2018 at the Mustang Center

The 50th Anniversary Celebration was carried on just about every day during the summer season with guests coming from near and far to learn more about the Pryor Mountain Wild Horses. Once again, John & Lynda Nickle served as the "backbone" of the organization. This summer



Selfie: Brianna & Mercuria

we had two outstanding interns helping Lynda run the day-to-day operations of the Center and keep the public well informed about where to find those horses! For the third year, Kendra Price served as the main intern. This year Kendra took on the project to update some of the displays in the Center. Kendra is continuing her education at the University of Wyoming. In addition to Kendra, Brianna Rivera joined the staff as our high school intern. Brianna proved to be quite a gem as she was a quick learner

and has a great personality. Brianna showed her persistence as she took it upon herself to begin gentling Stiles and Mercuria, our resident mustangs who have held onto their wildness. Brianna is now a senior at Lovell High

Contact us at the Mustang Center

- * Website: pryormustangs.org
- * Phone: 307-548-WILD

PryorWild Tours 2018

2018 marked the 5th Anniversary of PryorWild tours. Owned and operated by Steve & Nancy Cerroni, PryorWild provides visitors with the exciting opportunity to view the wild horses in upper elevations of the Pryor Mountains where the majority of the Pryor Horses spend the summer months. The trip is an adventure in itself with the climb in elevation passing from the desert lowlands, through the forest, and up into the alpine meadows. In 2018, we headed up the mountain 68 days with the first tour on May 16 and the last on October 11. Nearly 200 people joined us from 30 states and 7 international countries. It is a real pleasure to meet new people but also feel it an honor to have return guests. Each day for us is special as the horse behaviors vary from day-to-day, and we get to see it through the eyes of our guests.



Contact PryorWild:

For more information visit our website:

- * www.pryorwild.com

Email to inquire about or schedule a tour

- * pryorwild@tctwest.net

The Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is fully supported by donations, gift shop sales, and small grants. In order to continue on with our work to preserve and promote the Pryor Mountain Wild Horses, we depend on the generosity of people who share our concern for these animals. Check the Mustang Center webpage to see the ways that you can help.



Linda and Bill Miller of Miller's Fabrication stand in front of the Wind Drinker name board and the bronze sculpture.

Wind Drinker 1000

When they run it looks like they are drinking the wind.

Reverend Floyd Schwieger

The Wind Drinker 1000 fundraiser is officially over as we have met our goal of 1000 gifts of \$100! We recently had the drawing for the table-sized brass sculpture, "A Family Matter" by T.D. Kelsey. This was an old-fashioned drawing with all names printed on individual labels and put into a ticket-tumbler. The winning ticket, Miller's Fabrication, came right here from Lovell, WY. In an extreme act of generosity Bill and Linda Miller, of Miller's Fabrication, donated the bronze statue back to the Mustang Center. The Millers were good friends of Reverend Schwieger and hoped the statue could continue to carry on the work to support the horses. Bill remarked, "Maybe Reverend Schwieger is smiling down on us now."

The Mustang Center Board of Directors will decide how to best use the bronze statue for fundraising efforts. We thank all of you who contributed to our Wind Drinker 1000 fundraiser. The name board at the Center honors the contributions made throughout the many years of this fundraising event. Your contributions have helped us carry on support of the Pryor Mountain Wild Horses.



2018 was an exciting year for the Pryor Mountain Wild Horses and the Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Center. It is a real honor being a part of the ongoing collaborative effort to save the wild horses who live just to the north of our community. The challenge now is to continue the work to ensure the future of this very special national treasure.

Thoughts from Nancy Cerroni, President of the Mustang Center Board of Directors

Your donations are critical to continue with the work of the Mustang Center.

Donations may be made online at <http://www.pryormustangs.org>, over the telephone, or through the mail. Please mail the form below to:

**Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Center
P.O. Box 385
Lovell, WY 82431**

Enclosed is my contribution of ☐ \$10 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$1,000
☐ \$25 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ (Other) \$_____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____