



Pryor Mountain
WILD MUSTANG CENTER

FALL 2022 NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 385 • 1106 Road 12 • Lovell, WY 82431

2022: PATTERNS OF LIFE



London's Band Runs to Water

Each year carries with it the natural patterns of life on the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. There is a predictable routine, a rhythm of life and death that plays out each year.

Loss is a normal, but difficult part of the pattern of life. 2022 began with the loss of the beautiful mare, Phoenix, at what would have been her 30th year. It was soon apparent that two other aging horses had disappeared through the winter as well. The stallion, Bolder, had lived an amazing life both in the spotlight of his famous sire, Cloud, and as a strong stallion in his own right. He had made a comeback in 2021 as a band stallion. However, he was last seen that fall and never made a reappearance in 2022. The mare, Blue

Sioux, had a quiet, but steady role that provided stability in her bands. She had been a part of Bolder's band and also disappeared along with him in the fall/winter of 2021. It is understandable when the old ones die, but difficult when the young ones leave us too soon. This was so true with the loss of the young mare, Talia, and her brand new foal that was named Windwalker. Their deaths were a mystery, although it can be assumed that the three-year old's body condition was just not strong enough for motherhood.

On the other end of life's spectrum is birth. Each birth brings a sense of excitement and hope for the future. In 2022, the first foal made an appearance in early April with the most recent showing itself in mid-October. Twenty foals born with 19 of them left to run, play, and grow up in their Pryor world.

In between the births and deaths are horses, young and old, that carry out their unique way of life in the Pryors. The number of horses is high right now with a total over 200. Despite the number, there were many times in the year when the horses were extremely hard to find. They have adapted to an increase in numbers and some drought-caused conditions by dispersing themselves across the range. It was interesting to observe the horses' self-regulation behavior to find resources they need for survival. This has paid off as overall their body conditions look very good as they head into winter.

Throughout the year, we anticipated that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) would release a gather plan to reduce the population of horses. Since 2009, the BLM had a management plan that utilized fertility control and small gathers to limit the population. This is a good solution and can be effective to not only control the population, but also minimize the loss of genetic diversity which is critical for longterm health of the herd. The Mustang Center will continue to advocate for this solution and work to help ensure the development of management plans that will allow these horses to continue their patterns of life well into the future.

PRYOR HORSES - KEEPING COUNT

Age Range	Fall 2021			Fall 2022		
	Female	Male	2021 Total	Female	Male	2022 Total
Total Horses	113	79	194	120	89	209
21 and older	16	0	16	19	0	19
16-20	14	4	18	15	8	23
11-15	23	22	45	20	18	38
1-10	50	48	98	57	53	110
Foals	11	6	17	9	10	19

2022 BIRTHS - NAMES START WITH W

Wyatt Earp (M)	Windsor (M)	Wonder (F)
Willa (F)	Wildrose (F)	Windsong (F)
Wizard (M)	Wynonna (F)	Wild Bill (M)
Windwalker (D)	Red Wolf (M)	Wyoming Whisper (F)
Wylie (M)	Winoka (M)	Wanderer (M)
Wrangler (M)	Warrior King (M)	Wildfire (F)
Willow (F)	Wind River (F)	

F-Female M-Male D-Deceased



THE WORK OF THE PRYOR MOUNTAIN WILD MUSTANG CENTER: 2022

MISSION: The Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Center is dedicated to preserving the future of the wild horses of the Pryor Mountains.

PURPOSE STATEMENTS:

1. Inform visitors of the historic significance of the local mustang herd.
2. Provide visitors with an unforgettable experience, viewing live mustangs in a magnificent setting.
3. Educate visitors to learn about the dynamics of a mustang herd, the social interactions within individual bands, and the mustang's place alongside other species.
4. Work collaboratively with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the National Park Service to preserve and promote a genetically viable herd of wild horses in the Pryor Mountains.

The Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Center is committed to preserving the future of the wild horses of the Pryor Mountains. As a nonprofit organization, we keep a strong focus on this mission along with the four purpose statements that guide us day-to-day.

Much of the work of the first three purpose statements takes place in the four walls of the Mustang Center. This little log cabin at the east end of Lovell, Wyoming is a hub of activity during the months of May-September. This year, our visitor numbers were down; possibly due to the June flooding in the Yellowstone area and the high price of fuel. However, we still had over 3000 guests from 48 states. This year we met people from numerous international countries which was a pleasure after the years of the pandemic. Once folks entered our door, they were greeted by either Diane Granger or Anne Harder, two local individuals with a strong interest in the Pryor Horses. Through the expertise of Diane and Anne and the educational displays & videos, visitors were able to walk away with a strong knowledge base of the horses and where to possibly see them in their natural setting.



Educational displays of the Mustang Center

PRYORWILD TOURS

The Mustang Center continues to work hand-in-hand with PryorWild Tours. This makes it possible to truly meet the second purpose statement by “giving visitors an unforgettable experience of viewing the Pryor Mustangs in their magnificent setting. Again, the summer months were filled with groups of folks from all over the United States and many international visitors. It is a truly Western adventure filled with a rugged road up the mountain and the reward of all those wild horses in their natural land.

MUSTANGS AT THE MUSTANG CENTER: A LIVING EXHIBIT OF PRYOR HORSES

The Mustang Center has a twelve-acre facility just to the west of the building which is a showcase for Pryor Horses. The current horses: Stiles, Mercuria, and Paquita are beautiful examples of Pryor Mustangs. Visitors are able to view live mustangs and see firsthand the colors and conformation of Pryor Horses.

The horse facility has a large, secure corral with two shelters. In addition, most of the acreage is pasture land which has been available to the horses. This summer, the grass was lush; even to the point we were able to harvest a good crop of hay. However, it soon became apparent that Paquita was showing signs of founder on the lush grass. We removed her and took her to Steve & Nancy Cerroni's ranch where she was able to regain her health.

At that point, we took the steps necessary to make the area safe for horses who aren't accustomed to rich pasture land. This involved the construction of a durable fence to separate the dry lot on the far east end of the pasture. Thanks to the generosity of donors from across the United States and the volunteer time and expertise of Steve Cerroni, we now have three distinct “ecosystems” on the place: the corrals, the grass pasture, and the dry lot with native vegetation. Now our current Pryor Horses and any more that we acquire in the future have a safe and healthy environment to live out their lives.



Mercuria, Paquita & Stiles



EDUCATE & INFORM - SCHOOL TRIPS



Nancy Cerroni & Joann Almlof at Rocky Mt. Elem School



Nancy explains the colors of Pryor Horses.

There's not much better than bringing children and wild horses together! It is pretty much magic! Two key verbs that guide the work of the Mustang Center are "educate and inform." What better way to accomplish this work than to educate local students about the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range which is basically right in their backyard. This past spring we used a two-prong approach to teach students about local horses. . The first involved grade-appropriate presentations with photos and information about the wild horses and their habitat. The second was guided field trips to the horse range. This year second graders from Lovell Elementary School and the three elementary schools in Powell, WY learned about the Pryor Horses. The entire Rocky Mountain Elementary School in Cowley, WY participated in an all-school STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) activity. The students learned about identifying characteristics of wild horses as well as the structure of the bands. They were equipped to go out into the field to see horses and actually identify them. The field trips for all the students were in mid-May. This proved to be a wonderful time as several bands were very visible at that time. We took short hikes, following horse trails to give students the full experience of horse watching. Just imagine a line of students hiking quietly to get a better look at a horse. They truly understood the need for quiet in this wild land. The biggest thrill for all was seeing Titania and her new foal, Wizard. With their bright red dun coats, everyone was able to spot them in the desert terrain.



Hiking to Horses!



A Reward - From the bus we saw Titania & Wizard... and the rest of the band.

THE WILD PRYOR WORLD

Guest Reporter
Forellen Bonham

A place of freedom and balance; The Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range

I have never been in a more calming and stress-free place. Between the balance of life and death and the freedom and naturalness of the wild horses, it is a place of trueness. It is a unique and genuine place, from on top of the Sykes Ridge Mountains to the lower Dryhead. Everything seems to fall into place: birth, death, sun, clouds, heat and cold. It is all so natural and beautiful and a part of the circle of life on the range.

Being able to be a part of these mountains has a feeling to it that no other place can create. I am able to connect with the place and look deeper into the stories of the horses and range than what I can just see at a glance.

When I'm up on the mountain I can be free. I don't have to worry or stress over school, homework or anything, I can just admire and be a part of this beautiful place. I feel put together when I'm on the mountain. It feels like nothing off the mountain exists: no war, no danger, no politics. The only things alive and important are the organisms on the mountain.

Being able to feel the breeze and sun, smell the scent of horses and earth and hear the pounding of hooves running across the hard ground creates the best feeling ever.

This place has greatly impacted my life ever since I first visited and fell in love five years ago. I just can't get enough. It is the only place I want to be and is involved in my biggest dreams. It is a place of home and comfort. Sleeping in a tent, cooking over a fire and waking up to horses and peace is all I could ever ask for.

This is the place where dreams are made and come true. It is a place of happiness and freedom. It is a place of balance and the place of my dreams.



Wynonna & Sophia - Photo by Forellen

Forellen Bonham was 11 years old when her parents surprised her with a trip to the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. The first horse she saw was Hickok, and she fell in love. Since then she and her parents have been back to the horse range many times. Forellen wrote this piece at the age of 16 after her visit in 2021. Her future goals are to attend college; possibly in Montana so she can be closer to the horses. At college she will work to become a teacher and an author. She will continue to study the Pryor horses and advocate for them as much as possible.



ON-THE-RANGE COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

The fourth purpose statement of the Mustang Center defines the philosophy of collaboration that was initiated many years ago by the organization's founding members. The Mustang Center is always on the look-out for ways that we can help with on-the-range projects that will improve habitat, provide safety for the horses, or educate the public while viewing the Pryor Horses. The Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). However, the land of the horse range is under the jurisdiction of the BLM, the US Forest Service, and the National Park Service. During 2021-22, we collaborated with both the BLM and Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area (BHCNRA) on several projects as listed below:

Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area:

- Removed barbed wire fences to prevent injury.
- Partnered to upgrade three cattle guards to "Wild Horse Annie" cattle guards which are safe for horses.
- Partnered to replace sign damaged by vandalism.

Bureau of Land Management:

- Helped return two escaped Pryor horses, Vaquera and Tapadero, to the range.
- Rebuilt sign post for Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range sign.
- Removed Russian Olives (an invasive species) from water areas.



From the Mustang Center Board President: **JOANN ALMLOF**

What a gift it has been this past year to be part of the work being done at the Mustang Center. We all know how special these horses are but it's the dedication of the people at the Center that bring Reverend Schwieger's vision to life. Diane Granger faithfully visits the Dryhead nearly every morning so she is prepared to help visitors find horses each day as well as helping to maintain the Center. Steve Cerroni never says "no" when we ask him to tackle a maintenance or horse related issue and treats our visitors like they are family. And then there is Nancy Cerroni who began her tutelage under the Reverend and now leads all of us in preserving the genetics of the Pryor herd. Nancy touches every part of the work we do - she is very knowledgeable about the horses - gaining information from observations during tours or personal visits to the mountain. Nancy maintains the relationship with the Park Service, the BLM and the Lovell Chamber, handles our finances and our technology, fills up FaceBook with photos & information, visits with school children in the area teaching them about the horses, and so many other things.

I am so grateful for these people, but none of the work we do could be done without all of you that have supported us over the years. Your financial support whether through a tour, a purchase at the Mustang Center or your generous donations, funds us throughout the year and allows us to accomplish amazing things. Back in the 1960's when a small group decided to save these horses, I wonder if they could have imagined where all of this would go. Now all of us help in some way to carry on their vision of the Pryor Mountain herd to live free and wild for many, many years to come. I am so very thankful to be just a small part of this.

**THE MUSTANG CENTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THANKS YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS AND ASK FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT AS WE WORK TO PRESERVE THE
FUTURE OF THE PRYOR MOUNTAIN WILD HORSES.**

**Joann Almluf, President Jason Beal, Vice President
Georgette Lewis, Secretary/Treasurer
Kate Allred Amanda Bennion
Matthew Dillon Scott Hayworth**



John T. Nickle, co-founder of the Mustang Center has moved to Texas to be closer to family. His contributions to the Pryor Horses will not be forgotten.