

Pryor Mountain WILD MUSTANG CENTER

2016 NEWSLETTER

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

Cloud



A Portrait of Cloud
August 2015

The biggest news story of 2016 involved Cloud, the internationally beloved palomino who would have turned 21 at the end of May. Each year we always wait to see which horses re-emerge after the long winter. Cloud had last been seen in November 2015. His body condition looked good going into winter. He had spent much of the late summer and fall quietly grazing near Krueger's Pond. For the most part, there was an acceptance of his new role as a bachelor stallion, however, there was something different about him. This can best be described as a change in spirit. From a very young age he was a band stallion with a bigger-than-life persona. This was a stallion no one could challenge. In early May 2016, there was an eager anticipation to see him. Cloud was typically a very visible horse. His bright, white coat was easily spotted from near or far. This anticipation continued, but diminished through the summer months. We just couldn't answer the question, "Where is Cloud?" It certainly wasn't from a lack of trying that he wasn't spotted. Hundreds of people came to the mountain looking for him. Cloud drew people like a magnet. Through the work of Ginger Kathrens, Cloud had reached international stardom. His story

touched millions of peoples' hearts. People have shared countless inspirational stories of how Cloud had made a difference in their lives. Even the local folks who usually don't show much interest in the wild horses asked us, "Have you seen that yellow horse?" When asked about Cloud, whether in person, through email, or on FaceBook, the response was always the same, "No, we haven't seen him...yet." As we came to the one year anniversary of his last sighting, we are ready to report that in all likelihood, Cloud is no longer with us. The details of his disappearance will probably never be known. But to us this mystery is fitting and adds to his legend.

2016 on the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range

In 2016, the Pryor Horses carried on their normal pattern of life in their rugged habitat. In the spring they began their migration to the top of the mountain in search of fresh green grass. By summer, the majority of the horses were found in the mountain meadows in the upper elevations. The exception to this is the small group of Dryhead/Lower Sykes horses who spend the summer in the heat of the area in and around Bighorn Canyon Recreation Area. A small gather had been planned for 2016 to help control the herd population. However, due to some legal issues, this was not allowed to occur. The 2016 foal crop was a small one due to the effects of the fertility control plan. Eleven foals were born from April to September. This year all the foals were named with the letter "Q". Three of the foals did not survive. One died shortly after birth and the other two died for unknown reasons in October. In 2016, the herd had a 0% growth rate with a small birth number and a nearly equal number of horses that may have died during the year (see related article).



2015 Dryhead colt, Pax, is a very stripy grullo.

December 2016 Herd Population			
Age Range	Female	Male	Total
Total Horses	96	68	164
Over 10	39	18	57
1-10	52	47	99
2016 Foals	5	3	8



2016 filly, Quillan
Photo taken 11/26/16

2016 at the Mustang Center

The Mustang Center was a busy place this summer. Once again, John and Lynda Nickle headed up operations of the Center. These two dedicated individuals freely give their time and effort on behalf of the Pryor horses and the Mustang Center. In addition, three staff members, Kendra Price, Kassi Renner, and Brianna Harvey helped to provide information to visitors. The staff at the Mustang Center works diligently to carry out the mission of the Center to “preserve and interpret the Pryor Mountain mustangs.” The main work at the Mustang Center is educating the public about the wild horses and where they are most likely to find them out on the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. In addition, the crew works to manage the gift shop with a well-stocked collection of “horse related” items. The staff at the Mustang Center are the first ones to check in the PryorWild tour guests before they head up for their day trip to the top of the mountains. Lynda reported that over 4,000 people visited the Mustang Center this year. These people came from all 50 states and 23 international countries. Who would have ever thought Lovell, WY would attract such national and international attention? It is all because of the herd of little horses that quietly live in the nearby Pryor Mountains.

For more information visit our website:
www.pryormustangs.org

PryorWild Tours

PryorWild, in conjunction with the Mustang Center, completed their third season of providing tours to view the wild horses in the upper elevations of the Pryor Mountains. The tours continue to be a popular and exciting trip. This year over 250 people joined us as we negotiated the rugged Burnt Timber Ridge Road to get a glimpse of the horses in their natural habitat, grazing on life-sustaining grasses on the very top of the Pryor Mountains. Our guests represent places from all over the United States and the world. Many people said that the tour was the highlight of their Western vacation! In addition to the tours this year, we've added a Bunkhouse to provide our guests with comfortable, rustic lodging while in the area. The Bunkhouse is a private cabin with all the amenities set within a Wyoming ranch. The Bunkhouse is available for both tour guests and those who are visiting the area for other reasons. Check out the PryorWild website for information about the upcoming tour season and the Bunkhouse:

www.pryorwild.com



Management of the Herd

The Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range and the herd of horses that live there are managed by both natural and human factors. These factors help achieve an essential balance that can maintain a healthy population of horses on a healthy range. The Mustang Center understands the importance of working collaboratively with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) from the Billings, MT Field Office to ensure effective management practices.

Management of the Horses: Last year's newsletter reported the population at 166.

This year's estimated population is at 164. Population control is managed by natural factors which include natural mortality, weather, and injury. Cloud was not the only aged horse that disappeared during the year. Winemucca, the oldest horse



Changing of the Guard: A group of young bachelors prepare to take on the stallion leadership roles

on the mountain was last seen in August 2016 at the age of 28. In addition we have questions about the status of aged stallions: Coronado, Merlin, Seattle, Durango, and Sitting Bull. Fiesta, a 2005 bachelor, may be gone, possibly due to an injury sustained in a stallion fight.

Human management includes two main methods: fertility control and gather/removal. In the Pryors, a fairly aggressive fertility plan uses a contraceptive vaccine, PZP, to curb the birth rate. As reported on the front page, this drastically reduced the birth rate in 2016. The PZP treatments will begin again in the first part of 2017. Depending on population numbers, a small scale gather may occur in late summer of 2017. The BLM uses a bait trap process which greatly reduces the stress that caused by helicopter removals. All management utilized by the BLM requires a public comment period. The Mustang Center maintains a comprehensive data base of the horses which dates back to the 1970s. This is used to help us make well-informed comments to the BLM regarding management decisions.

Management of the Land: BLM Administrative Pasture

The southwest corner of the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range has not been available to the wild horses. The area of over 2000 acres was fenced off and used primarily for holding horses during large-scale gathers. However, this changed when the 2015 BLM Resource Management Plan added the area back into the land available to the wild horses. In the summer of 2016, the first phase was completed to open up about 600 acres of the southwest corner. The next phase will open up the rest of the acreage. By November 2016, wild horses were already beginning to use the land for their winter range.

Mustangs at the Center

The Mustang Center is committed to providing a safe, secure home for horses that have been removed from the Range. This started back with Dale Hartman who brought his own Pryor Horses to the Mustang Center for many years so visitors could see Pryor horses up close. A few years ago, a Pryor horse named Stiles needed a new home. We immediately made arrangements to bring him to the Mustang Center. Shortly after that, a Pryor mare named Besa joined him and the two became great ambassadors for the Mustang Center.

We are sad to report that our Pryor mare, Besa, died earlier this fall. She had suffered with Cushings Disease for quite awhile. This left Stiles alone. In 2015, the Mustang Center adopted a mare/foal pair, Mercuria & Paquita. They stayed at



Steve and Nancy's home for a year. When Besa died, the decision was made to bring Mercuria to the Mustang Center pasture to be a companion horse to Stiles. It was also decided to keep Paquita at Steve and Nancy's where she can continue to make good progress with her training. It wasn't love at first sight for Mercuria and Stiles. There has been a period of adjustment as Mercuria is definitely a horse with an attitude! Once the cold weather hit, she did seem to calm down and the two seem to be developing a more peaceful coexistence. Vis-

itors to the Mustang Center will be able to see two Pryor horses, one from the mountain and one from the Dryhead, who have maintained their wild temperaments. In addition, the two represent two classic colors of the Pryor Horses, Stiles with his jet black coloration and Mercuria, a very stripy grulla.



Mercuria
Photo by Patti Joiner

In Memory: Larry Slater Big Horn Engraving

Larry Slater was a longtime friend and supporter of the Mustang Center. Through his business, Big Horn Engraving, Larry kept us well stocked with t-shirts and hats that are worn all over the world. He was also responsible for engraving the plates for our Wind Drinker board. Just this year his company made the new sign at the front of our property. Larry fought a courageous battle with cancer and died in late November 2016. Larry will be missed.

Pryor Mustangs—2015 Adoption “Ojai’s Big Adventure”

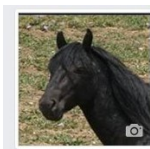
In 2015, the BLM removed 18 horses and placed them through an online adoption process. One of the young horses, Ojai, has had quite a year. Ojai was the yearling daughter of stallion, Baja, and mare, Washakie. On the mountain, Ojai was a shy little filly that didn't move far from her mother's side. After the gather, Ojai spent the first year with Steve and Nancy Cerroni. During this time she showed herself to be a horse with a sweet temperament. She responded well to gentling methods and by the end of the first year had learned all the basics up to and including her first ride. She never offered to do anything wrong. By September, she was ready to travel to her new home. Steve transported her to California where she spent a month in quarantine at Monte Roberts' Flag is Up Farms. After that she boarded a plane which led her to her new home in France with a loving owner, Mary. Ojai has a great new home with lots of space to run and companionship with Mary and her other horses.



Ojai, the
Pryor Mountain Mus-
tang, runs in her new
home in France.

Pryor Mustangs—Beyond the Range

Want to keep up with the Pryor horses who have been removed? Our Facebook page, [Beyond the Range](#), was established to provide news about these horses. This gives us a forum to share updates of Pryor Mustangs who are living beyond the Range. We currently have over 1200 likes on the page.



Pryor Mustangs
Beyond the
Range
@pryormustangsbeyond



Our Mission:

The Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Center is dedicated to preserving and interpreting the Pryor Mountain Mustangs, their history, habitat needs and historical significance.

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.

2017 Goals

The Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Center continues to provide on-site interpretation and work on projects to maintain the facilities and develop educational information:

- ◇ We will continue to enhance the corrals and pasture to ensure a safe and secure spot for the two wild horses who reside there.
- ◇ John oversaw the project to replace the deck on the west side of the building. In the summer 2017 we will replace the deck on the north side.
- ◇ In addition, we will work to update our website and the displays in the Center.

Mustang Center Gift Shop: Don't forget, you can order items from our gift shop, and we can mail them to you. We have PMWMC logo t-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, photo cards of the wild horses, and other one-of-a-kind items available. Please contact us for more information and to place an order!

Wind Drinker 1000



When they run it looks like they are drinking the wind.
Reverend Floyd Schwieger

The Wind Drinker 1000 program continues to be a successful fund raising program for the Mustang Center. Since 2007, we have added brass plaques onto our large Wind Drinker display board with the donor's name and address. As of December 27, 2016 we have 796 Wind Drinkers. Once we hit 1000, we will have our drawing for the table-sized brass sculpture, "A Family Matter" by T.D. Kelsey. Help us with our goal to reach 1000 by the end 2017!



I want to thank and recognize those from across the United States and around the world for your financial support, as well as your thoughts and suggestions. We really appreciate you! Here's hoping for a great year in 2017.

John Nickle, President of the Mustang Center Board of Directors

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 _____

For a gift of \$100 or more, you will receive a personalized plate on a permanent display in the Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Center. Please write how you would like your plate to read below. *(Generally, the top line is used for names and the bottom for locations.)*

Line 1 _____

Line 2 _____