

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



BLM

Go

[BLM>Wild Horses and Burros>Information Center>Newsletters and News](#)

[Print Page](#)

National

- [+ What We Do](#)
- [+ Visit Us](#)
- [+ Information Center](#)
- [+ Get Involved](#)
- [+ Our Offices/Centers](#)
- [+ Contact Us](#)



Summer 2010

**National Wild Horse and Burro Newsletter
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

Table of Contents

A Little Girl's Dream

A Story of Perseverance and a Couple of Great Volunteers

Founder of EquestrianSingles.com Adopts Mustang

Sage



Bailey and Twilight's first ride.

If you would like to submit articles for the National Wild Horse and Burro Newsletter, please e-mail articles and photos to Janet_Neal@blm.gov.

All stories must be about freezemarked mustangs and/or wild burros. Please ensure pictures are sent at the same time the story is (or immediately thereafter).

Photos should include the name of each animal(s) and person(s) in the photo.

I would also appreciate it if all stories submitted are about Mustangs and Burros that have not passed away.

If the photo(s) are copyrighted or require credit be given, please indicate so at the time of submission.

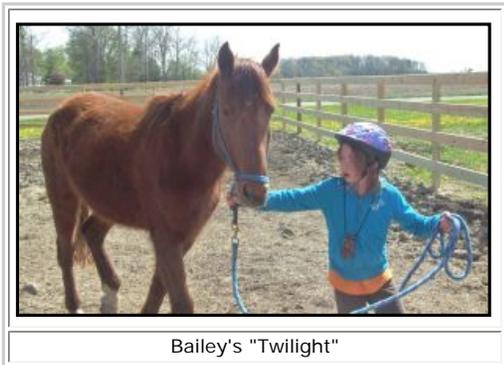
A Little Girl's Dream
By Bailey and Vicky Brown Pugsley

First, I want to thank the BLM for the wonderful Mustang and Burro Adoption Program. I wish these wonderful animals could continue to live wild on the public rangelands. But, since that is not possible I feel the program finds the best homes for the mustangs and burros.

In August 2009, I read in the newspaper that there was going to be a mustang/burro adoption close to my home in September. As a young girl, I had always wanted to own a mustang. I felt they were the most beautiful animals I had ever seen.

When I planned to go on Friday night to view the mustangs before the adoption, I decided to take my 6-year-old grand-daughter, Bailey, and my 2-year-old grandson, Hayden. Bailey had been taking riding lessons since she was 3 and was extremely excited to go see the mustangs. We knew from the very first time she had been around a horse she interacted very well with them and had a special gift. But, we had no idea how powerful it was until the BLM's adoption.

I explained to the kids that we were just going to look because their MiMi always wanted to see a real live mustang. When we arrived we were walking around the pens and I noticed Bailey kept going back to the same horse. I also noticed a rough looking chestnut gelding that seemed particularly interested in Bailey. He would come to the front of the pen each time she approached nudging other horses out of the way.



Bailey's "Twilight"

I told the children in advance not to reach in because the horses were wild and they might bite. Bailey stood at the pen and whispered gently to the horse with hair almost the same color as hers. I observed Bailey as she reached in and rubbed the horse on her head. I ran over and told her to be careful. She said to me, "It's alright MiMi. He told me so."

After about 3 hours I explained it was time to leave. Bailey did not want to leave and begged me to go back the next day. I agreed because I was curious and wanted to watch the actual adoption.

The next day we returned. Bailey immediately went to the pen with the chestnut gelding. She called for him and he ran full force toward her and nuzzled her through the fence. Bailey spent the next 7 hours visiting with

the Mustang. I talked with the BLM volunteers and others at the adoption. I asked about the requirements to adopt. I also found out that the chestnut gelding was 3 years old.

As I watched the horse and Bailey together I felt they already had a special bond. I knew in my heart that they belonged together.

I hesitantly called my husband and talked to him about possibly adopting the gelding. He asked what was so special about this certain horse.

I told him that physically he was not the most appealing horse there, but, there was just something about his eyes and the way he responded to Bailey. He, being the wonderful man he is, agreed we could adopt him. I talked to some trainers at the adoption who take mustangs and do the initial gentling of the animal before passing it on to the adopters. They agreed to take the chestnut gelding to gentle for us.

When I told Bailey we would adopt the Mustang she was absolutely thrilled, and she told me "I told Twilight that he would be my horse!" Yes, she had already named him.

The trainers, Megan and Cliff from Claddagh Farm Horse Rescue in Burgoon, Ohio, loaded up the red horse and drove off. Bailey waved until they drove out of sight.

Meg and Cliff kept Twilight for 3 long months. Bailey asked everyday when he would come home. In the meantime, my husband with the help of family and friends built the run-in and put up the fence.



Bailey and Twilight's first ride.

We decided to surprise Bailey and did not tell her when they were bringing Twilight home. On December 12, Bailey and I were washing dishes and from the window saw a truck pull up and Bailey said, "Twilight is home, I dreamed he was coming home last night!"

From the moment Cliff unloaded Twilight, he and Bailey have had a relationship that is beyond words. In minutes she was walking him on a lead rope around the paddock. If he wasn't on the lead he would just follow her wherever she went. When she had to leave him he would stand at the fence and watch and wait for her to come back.

Bailey has been active in his training and he responds better to her than any grown-up. The other morning Bailey got up and said Twilight

was ready for her to ride him that day. I asked her how she knew. She said he told her in a dream. I was very hesitant, but, she was just as insistent. We walked down to the barn. Bailey walked Twilight around a little and then she told him that she was going to ride him. I swear I saw a twinkle in his eyes. I very slowly lifted her up onto his back. He did not even flinch. I was so amazed. I wish that anyone who is considering adopting a mustang could see Bailey and Twilight together.

Bailey's Twilight has become such a special part of our entire family. That plain red 3-year-old gelding that no one noticed has become a beautiful well-mannered chestnut horse that we wouldn't trade for any other horse in the world. In the future, we hope to adopt another mustang. Our 3-year-old grandson starts riding lessons tomorrow and is already asking when he will get his mustang.

We want to thank Megan and Cliff (cfhrescue.org) and the BLM!!



Bailey continuing to work with Twilight.

A story of perseverance...

By Kristie Tetreault

Part One - The Build Up

Name one girl that at some point in her childhood didn't dream of owning a horse. I am no exception. It wasn't until I was 29 that I could finally make it happen. I think pony was likely my first word. No matter how much I begged, cried or bribed, it simply wasn't in the cards. This is not to say I never had the opportunity to see or ride horses. I just never had any formal training what-so-ever. ZIP.

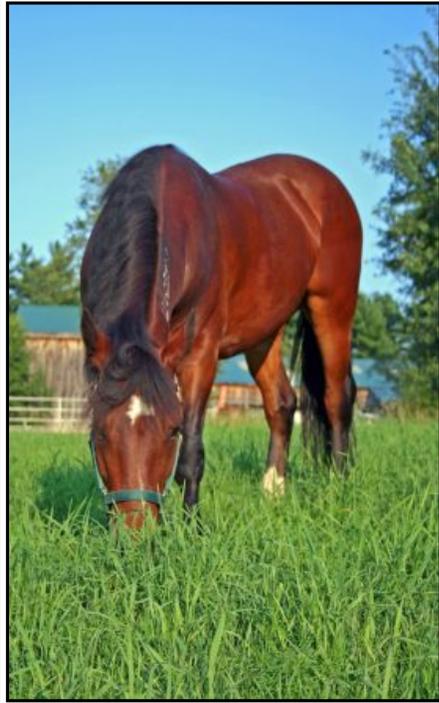
Fast forward 20 years and I am finally in a position to make my girlhood dream a reality. Then it dawns on me that I am about to turn thirty and jump into a lifestyle that kids normally begin at age nine or younger! Fear and doubt start setting in. I love horses, but how do you take care of them? What do you feed them, how much, how often? Who do you ask? Am I to old? Lucky for me I had great family support that encouraged me to read and educate myself and that it was NEVER too late to learn.

Now, the next big question. Where am I going to get a horse? I had no idea. I wouldn't know if I was getting a lame horse or a champion jumper. I just wouldn't know. I felt a little defeated and overwhelmed. My wonderful father-in-law stopped by with a flyer for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Wild Horse and Burro adoption. I was still a little leery. I went to the BLM's National Wild Horse and Burro website and did a lot of research on the BLM and decided that was what I wanted. A Mustang! He needed me and I needed him.

The weekend of the adoption I was still building my "Mustang proof" paddock. I was able to go on Friday and view all the magnificent horses. Sunday morning, I pulled in with my family and a borrowed stock trailer. I was terribly excited, but, honestly I could have been sick right then. My stomach was so tied in knots. I had no self confidence. Just a love and a desire that resonated from deep within. I wanted the Mustang that no one else wanted. The one that needed the most love. We walked around. My choices were between a

stallion, a mare, and two geldings. All of them were absolutely beautiful. They all looked like they had so much pride and confidence except for one. He was in the middle pen and looked a little overwhelmed and sad. I said, "that's the one"! Our personalities just seemed to be more on the same wave length. He was a 4-year-old gelding and had already been named. He'd had some gentling and was named Comet and still is. My daughter's name is Haillie. I'm sure you understand the connection. He was also the same age as my daughter. I signed the papers.

Part Two - Now What?



Yum! Nobody needs a lawnmower here!

We worked hard building Comet the required housing. The barn was fifty feet in length. We picked his stall, sawed a hole in the wall that led out to his own 50x20x8 rectangular paddock. He certainly enjoyed the freedom of a paddock that size with the ability to roam in and out as he chose. But, all that space made it hard for anyone to get close to him at first. Innocent newbie mistake which wouldn't have been that bad if there was a round pen to work him in. He is here and properly housed and fed. But, now what? I have no formal training but I am an avid reader and had started studying techniques from Pat Parelli's program. I respect Pat's program and his methods. But, to try and have a beginner horse and owner use the level one was next to impossible. To gain Comet's trust, I entered the area being quiet and still. After a few days, Comet approached me. This process is what allowed me to first touch Comet and build a little trust. I worked on grooming and picking up his feet. I was fanatical about it. I knew he had to get his feet trimmed soon, but, what farrier would want to touch a wild horse that had never had his feet handled?

I had no fear in the beginning. Comet had some training. I received a little paragraph from the person that worked with him. It said Comet had been halter started, but, would need a professional handler as he was sensitive to pressure. I could halter him; he would stand still for me. He liked to play with my feet. I thought it was all good. Fear didn't become a part until the farrier incident. That's what I call it; an incident. I found a farrier that was willing to come out and trim his feet. She was a very nice woman. She got through three hooves and on the fourth Comet kicked her square in the mouth sending her "blank" over tea kettle. The doubts crept back into my mind.

Did I do the right thing adopting Comet? Will it ever get better? Now What? It was at this point that I knew I had to get someone to help me train him. I needed a professional that was familiar with Mustangs. I scoured the internet for someone local and although there was a plethora of barns with trainers near me, I had a hard time finding someone that trained wild horses. After a month I got a response from a barn in NH. It was about an hour and a half from me. Although it was far, I thought all my prayers had been answered. I couldn't have been more wrong. The barn workers and trainer that accepted Comet spouted all their credentials, one after another.

All I wanted from Comet was a good trail horse, a friend. That was all. And so it began. Boarding and training was a monthly bill of \$700.00 plus three lessons a week for me. "No you cannot use your own farrier. We have our own. No you will not be working with your Mustang. He is in training. You shouldn't be petting him. That is a reward," said the trainer.

The trainer didn't do anything. These were all signs I didn't see right away. This trainer and barn were not right for us! Maybe I did see a little but was too afraid to speak up. So on we stayed and it got worse. I took lessons for five months and never once got to ride a single horse. They put shoes on Comet after scoffing at me when I meekly stated that he didn't need them.

I never saw the trainer work with Comet. One day I did see him work with another horse and I was appalled. I had never before witnessed someone kicking, punching or screaming at a horse. When I questioned him about this he laughed at me and called me a marshmallow. He also said, "Horses are stupid animals. They need this kind of treatment to respect a human. He said it's like your kids. You don't want them to be your friends, do you?"



I cried the whole way home. I was done. If this is how it was supposed to be, count me out. What did I do? I adopted Comet to give him a good life and save him from starvation and/or dehydration out in the wild and passed him on to a sadist. How was this better? I felt like a complete failure.

I had Comet in a place where he was not happy. It took all the hope out of me and likely him as well. We were laughed at and picked on. All my dreams got pushed away into some locked part of me. I began to regret ever having the notion of owning a horse. But life is funny sometimes. Just when you are ready to call it quits an angel is sent your way. Mine came in the form of a BLM volunteer conducting compliance inspections. I met Susan Booth first by phone. The phone rang and when I found out who it was, my body turned ice cold. Panic ensued. I thought here it is the sad end to this whole ordeal. This woman is going to take my horse away: do not pass go: do not collect \$200.00.

After the initial shock, I decided the best route to take was honesty. On my second phone call with Sue I just let down all the guards and flooded her with everything. I told her the whole story and more. It was an emotional storm that she bared the brunt of. At the end I was expecting her to be angry and disgusted with me. Why shouldn't she be? That was how I felt about myself. Instead she told me that she was going to help me. That she was sorry for what happened and that she'd call me back. Don't worry we will figure something out.

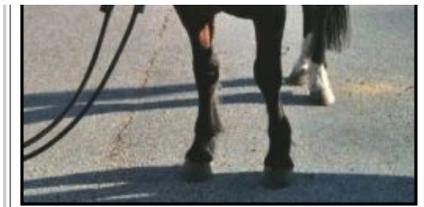
When I got off the phone I felt ecstatic. I was inundated with thoughts and emotions. I couldn't believe things were possibly going to change. But, change they did! Within two weeks this miracle worker of a person found not only a barn a half an hour away from my house to board Comet at. It had both indoor and outdoor round pens. She also got the nice tall man with the cowboy hat from the adoption to trailer Comet to the barn. She found me a great farrier and vet. Sue also introduced me to her husband, John. He told me he had a "way with horses" and he sure did. I left the first barn after paying good money and all Comet could do was lunge. One week to the day of taking Comet home, John had him saddled. It was all I could do not to cry.

Part Three - Epilogue

I call this a story of perseverance and I hope you see why. Sometimes it is hard to know what path is the right one. It is easy to want to give up in the face of adversity if you choose the wrong one. But, perseverance usually will prevail. I honestly don't know where Comet and I would be if I had not met Susan and John. What if they had not done 100% compliance checking? What if I got skipped over? What if I had stayed too scared to reach out for help? But, everything happens for a reason. Everything makes you the person you are. Now I can say I like that person. I feel great knowing we are in good caring hands in the three months we've known Sue and John.. Comet and I have both grown and learned so much.

I received my title of ownership for Comet in July. I have never been happier. Victory! So this is the end of this story, but not really. Comet and I are both continuing our training but just as important, our friendship.

I would personally like to thank the volunteers and the BLM.



"Comet" all saddled up.

Founder of EquestrianSingles.com Adopts Mustang By Otis Dyer

People say there is an incredible bond that forms between a wild mustang and his first human experience. Even noted trainers like John Lyons acknowledges how willing Mustangs are and how they can be trained to do extraordinary feats in a short period of time. But the real transformation is not what happens to the wild horse, it's what happens to their new adoptive owners.

When EquestrianSingles.com founder, Marcia Zwilling, first met her flashy black yearling at the 2008 Extreme Mustang Makeover, it was love at first sight. She knew there was something very special about the filly. The monstrous blue dumpster whizzing by on a forklift at the Will Rogers Coliseum didn't faze the young horse.

The filly was gentled by 15-year-old Ryder Kallus at his home in Round Top, Texas. Ryder is a sophomore at La Grange High School. He made it a point of letting everyone know he named his filly, Miley, after Miley Cyrus. Though Ryder is autistic, he excels as a trainer. He has a soft gentle way about him and the special bond between Ryder and Miley was obvious from the start.

"At my first meeting with Ryder he told me he had a difficult time in school. The reason he loved training horses was because horses didn't judge you. I could see the obvious bond between them. Ryder decided not to adopt Miley because he already owned several horses. I instantly made the decision to adopt her and knew she would end up being one of the best horses I ever owned. Miley's has never disappointed me", said Marcia.

EquestrianSingles.com has promoted the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro adoptions in their monthly newsletter for the past 5 years. The online community recently became a sponsor of the Mustang Heritage Foundation and the Extreme Mustang Makeover events. Marcia went to Fort Worth, TX to support several of the website's members competing as trainers. Mark Lyon ended up winning that year. It was my first year attending the Extreme Mustang Makeover in Fort Worth and it was awesome. Marcia had no plans to adopt a Mustang until she met Miley.

"Ryder did such an amazing job with Miley. It was easy for me to continue working with her, said Marcia. For the next year, we formed a strong bond through lots of ground work and clicker training. Miley soon became accustomed to walking around with a saddle on her back. Eventually I started ponying her on trails with the other horses. When Miley turned three and was ready to be started under saddle, she was already trusting and fearless."



Marcia's first trail on Miley.

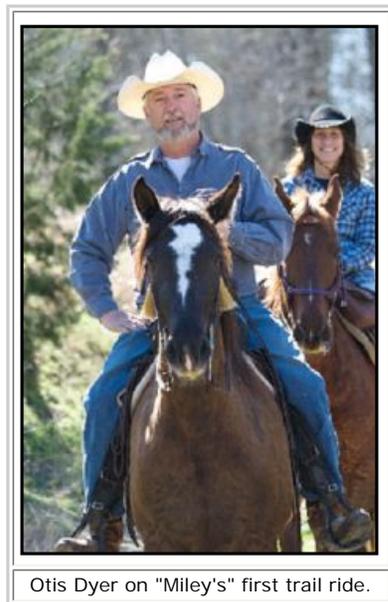
Marcia was grateful she had the perfect trainer for Miley. "I was lucky enough to have a good friend who was also an amazing trainer. Otis Dyer was the perfect choice to start Miley. I had watched him start his own horses and he was always patient and gentle. Otis never pushed his horses too hard. Instead, he made it fun for them to learn. He was the perfect trainer to continue training Miley. Within 3 weeks, Otis rode her on her first trail ride. He was impressed by how quickly she learned. Miley was his first Mustang to train and one of the best training experiences he has ever had", Marcia said.

Marcia could hardly wait to ride her. "My first trail ride on Miley was amazing! I enjoyed her smooth trot and easy canter. Her transitions were flawless. She had obviously aced the basics in less than 30 days and now it was up to me to reinforce what Ryder and Otis had taught her", said Marcia.

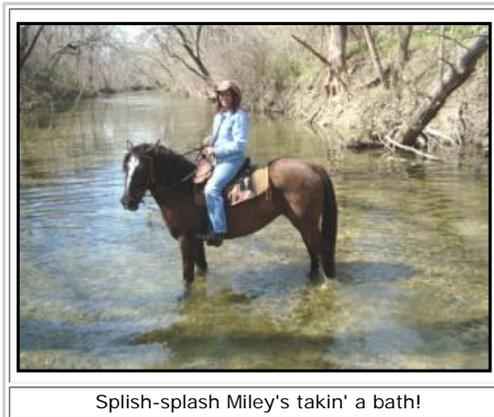
In the following weeks, Miley continued to amaze Marcia by her willingness and calm temperament.

"As we begin our journey together, I am so proud of my first Mustang. "Adopting Miley was the best thing

I've ever done. She is one special horse", said Marcia.



Otis Dyer on "Miley's" first trail ride.



Splish-splash Miley's takin' a bath!

Steven Drysdale
By Sage, the Super Mustang

Hi. My name is Sage. I am a BLM Mustang. I was born in Nevada in 2004. I spent a year in the wild. The BLM removed me from the public rangelands. The groceries and water were getting harder and harder to find. I was really hungry and thirsty when I was rescued.

My person, Steven, adopted me at a special adoption event in New Jersey. Trainers had already gentled me prior to the adoption. It's really a great idea. All my buddies were trained and adopted by great people. It really helps us to find an awesome family when we are trained a bit first.



"Sage" and the other competitors.

Can I Play Poker?

Yes, of course. Steven got lost on the way to the event. The Hillsboro Fire Department had to help him find the location where we were headed. Mustangs do not get lost. It's a people thing!

Here's a picture of the competitors. I saw a lot of my Mustang buddies. Dazz was even there with her adopter. It was great; sort of like a High School reunion. Our people tacked us all up and we were ready to go. All of us marched right up to the starting point and listened to the rules of the game. I passed the map to Steven. Once again, it's a people thing.

The Poker Run was not timed. It made it a lot easier for our people. We had 5 obstacles; all designed by a pretty well known horse and mustang trainer. Along the way you earn a playing card if your people are good.

First: A small trail through the woods...easy stuff...we do this all the time. Bingo! Dazz and I both received a card!

Second: We received a raw egg in a spoon and had to weave through cones and back. I had no problem. Steven cracked the egg on my saddle horn before I even got a chance to step over the starting line. The people putting on the run, let us go anyway. Clearly another people issue. I weaved through the cones and back. All those neck reining exercises the trainers taught me paid off.



Scary stuff. Found a tarp. Hah!

Third: Drag something. Darn no tarps in sight. Those things are so cool flapping in the wind. The choices were: cone, a log, or a barrel. Caly, another buddy, and I opted for the cone and trotted down to the cones. To my surprise, Steven selected the log! Totally uneventful. You drag the log down and back! No theatrics. Steven told me later he thought it would be quieter.

Fourth: Hill? I don't understand how a hill can be an issue. But, at the bottom of the hill was obstacle five. There was water at the bottom of the hill.

Fifth: The w-a-t-e-r. I was hoping it was merely a stream so I could just jump it. No such luck. I didn't get a straight, but Steven got a pair. OK. We did alright.

Always ready to try new events, I tripped across what looked like a good time on Equinesite.com's bulletin board. A Poker Run and a Trail Race! (Did someone say RACE????) I read through the information provided by the club for hints and clues. What are these obstacles you must traverse in order to 1) get a playing card and 2) pass through during your timed trail ride? Found it and can do it!



Here's me dragging the log. A piece of cake!



The End!

For more stories about me, I created a blog at steven.drysdale.vcf. I am just too good. After all, I am a Mustang!

♦ Note from Editor - Submissions may be edited to reduce the length or correct minor issues. After edits, if you would like the final "draft" article sent back for your personal review prior to including it in the newsletter, please indicate this.

Sally Spencer, BLM National Wild Horse and Burro Marketing Director
Janet Neal, National BLM Editor, Designer, and Graphic Artist

If your article is not in this edition of the National Wild Horse and Burro Newsletter, please keep checking back. Your story may be in the " [Success Stories](#) " section of this web site or included in the next editopn.

Thank you all for sending in stories about your great Mustangs and Burros!

Last updated: 06-10-2010

[USA.GOV](#) | [No Fear Act](#) | [DOI](#) | [Disclaimer](#) | [About BLM](#) | [Notices](#) | [Get Adobe Reader®](#)
[Privacy Policy](#) | [FOIA](#) | [Kids Policy](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Home](#)