

"Spirit"

By Evelyn Gore

In 2002, my family and I adopted our first mustang, Spirit. He was about six months old. Not long after we brought him home, Spirit followed us around like a puppy dog. Before he was old enough to be saddle trained many people told us to buy a horse that was already trained. They said a mustang would not be suitable for a young rider. We did not want a horse that could have had multiple owners and some bad habits. When Spirit turned four years old we took him and one of our mules to a presumably reputable trainer.

Everything seemed fine at first, until one day we stopped by to see how the training was going. Spirit was like a different horse. He had fear in his eyes and ran away when we approached him. The sides of his mouth were bloody and raw from being jerked around with a stud-chain. My mother and I realized that Spirit had not been trained using a least resistance method. We quickly made arrangements to get him and our mule out of there and to a different trainer that used more appropriate training techniques.



"Spirit" and Evelyn Gore.

The day we picked him up from the first trainer she was insistent that Spirit should be sold. She said that he was a dangerous horse and there was no way anyone could ride him, especially not a relatively inexperienced rider, like me.

However, we did not give up! Through lots of gentle-training and patience, Spirit is now a very well-trained saddle horse. He is literally "bomb proof". I can ride him Western, English and even bareback at a full gallop. I don't think I have ever ridden a horse that is as versatile as Spirit, the "un-trainable" wild horse.