



Where are they now? By Lisa Zelman

This part of the newsletter will be dedicated to animals that have been gentled in the IWHBA Learning Center and then adopted.

Houdini & Little Joe

In May of 2005, I had the opportunity to attend the *IWHBA Wild Horse Festival of Learning*. Little did I know that this experience would change my life. With the warm snort of a young colt's muzzle on my helmet, my passion for wild horses was ignited.

At the workshop, I had the opportunity to observe and work with expert clinicians. Although their methods were quite different, their goal was the same—successful introduction of a wild horse or burro into a new home with people. I had come to the clinic with veterans Vicki and Pam. Imagine our excitement, when we learned that we would be able to bring four of these amazing animals back to the Danada barn in Illinois! Thanks to the support of members of IWHBA, Utah BLM and Friends of Danada, we were able to adopt a bay (I call him Houdini; we was previously known as Moon), a brown & white pinto (Little Joe), a buckskin and a black and white pinto.

In June 2005, these four stallions arrived at the Danada Equestrian Center in Wheaton, IL. Owned and managed by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County.

So where are they now?

Well, three of the horses are currently under saddle training. Houdini and Little Joe have been ridden under saddle.

Even though the Danada Wild Horse Project began in June 1998, we volunteers had to wait for waivers to be finalized before we could begin working with the new horses. After months of looking longingly at our new friends through the round pen rails, we were finally able to swing open the gate and enter their world in late October 2005. Our initial involvement focused on caring for the horses—mucking stalls and feeding. During these sessions, we worked on getting the horses used to our presence and routines. These were exciting times—the first touches and the occasional explosions!

Halter and lead training commenced. Houdini came along quickly. Little Joe was a different story. He was apprehensive about being touched beyond his head. He became



Little Joe with Lisa Zelman

quite adept at using his head to block your moving to either side. We spent lots of time desensitizing him to accept being touched on his neck and side. With patience, kindness and lots of advance/retreat, he finally became comfortable being haltered from the side. Then we moved on to the feet. Due to his calmer nature, Houdini was fairly comfortable with having his legs and feet handled. However, he had “balance issues”, so giving up a foot was a challenge for him. Eventually he learned to stand comfortably on three legs.

Since Little Joe didn't like you to be on his side, he certainly was not happy about someone trying to hold on to his legs. He was the last of the four horses to get his feet trimmed. Despite this challenging beginning, I am happy to report that Joe now

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Little Joe at the Learning Center.



Houdini with Lisa Zelman



Moon at the Learning Center (aka Houdini)



Where are they now? (continued)

stands quietly for feet handling.

Groundwork continued with round penning and “lunging” with a long lead rope. We did many exercises on giving to pressure to prepare for tying. We also did lots of desensitization to a variety of things, including a lariat, plastic bag, umbrella, tarp, hose and crate. Then we began saddle training.

Houdini was a champ when it came to introducing the saddle and girth. The first time I sent him around the round pen with the saddle on and stirrups banging at his sides, I awaited his response. At one point he lowered his head, rounded his back and swung his hindquarters towards the center. I thought a buck was coming, but then he lifted his head up and calmly continued trotting.

Little Joe was more apprehensive about the saddle. We had to spend more time doing advance/retreat and desensitization. His first trot around the pen wearing a saddle resulted in a brief lift of his hind leg toward the girth.

Preparing the horses for a rider has been the most challenging and exciting part of the training. I have come to

understand that a foundation of trust is crucial for this step to progress safely. Over many months, we continued to build a relationship based on trust and respect.

We did a lot of preparatory work. I’m sure I looked quite silly jumping all around Houdini and Joe. I pulled on their manes, hugged their sides, hung from their necks and draped my arms across their backs. We worked on standing still near the mounting blocks. Both horses seemed to like plucking the twine on the straw bale with their lips. Eventually, I started laying across their withers and back. Then it was time to get that leg over.

Imagine this... It’s just you and the horse in the middle of a round pen. You’re standing on a mounting block, and the horse has learned to stand quietly while you jump up and lay across his back. In one hand is the end of a lead rope, attached to a halter—no bit or bridle. No saddle either, that comes later. The horse accepts your weight. You’ve patted his sides, his neck, his flank and his rump. Now it’s time to get that leg over. You need to use your arms to brace yourself against his neck and rump, as you

bring your knee up. If the horse suddenly moves, you could fall. You try not to think of this. If you’ve prepared the horse well, your knee comes up. You may rest it for a moment on his rump. Then your leg crosses over and meets the horse’s side. You stay low on his neck, as you could frighten him if you suddenly come into his view up there on his back. You pet him and quietly praise him – and breathe! As you capture your breath, you slowly push off the horse’s neck and sit up. You wait. You are this horse’s first rider. You are humbled. Then you dismount and thank your horse.

This was my experience with Houdini. Little Joe required more “baby steps” & desensitization. I didn’t sit on him the first time on.

Houdini was my first wild horse to ride. I will never forget it. It was only a small step in a round pen, but it was the beginning of his life as a saddle horse and mine as a horse trainer. Little Joe was my second.

These horses have brought great joy to my life. I feel privileged to work with them. They have taught me more than I have taught them. I can hardly wait for our next ad-

Utah BLM Adoption 2007 Schedule

March 23 & 24
Tribute to Wild Born Legacy
Heber, UT

April 20 & 21
Vernal, UT

May 18 & 19
9th Annual Wild Horse & Burro Festival
South Jordan, UT

June 1-3
Elko, NV

August 23-25
Sanpete County Fair
Manti, UT

IWHBA / BLM / AERC

In an effort to expose even more people to the wonderful world of wild horses, IWHBA will be present at several rides around the state this year, even having a horse on site to adopt out if someone falls in love. The rides we will be attending this year are as follows:

- **April 13-15**-Color Country Endurance Ride-Hurricane, UT;
- **May 12**-Hell’s Kitchen Canyon-Gunnison, UT;
- **June 22-24**-Strawberry Fields Forever-Strawberry, UT.

A Tribute to a Wild Born Legacy

The First annual *Tribute to a Wild Born Legacy* is a benefit to support the Intermountain Wild Horse & Burro Advisors, Inc. (IWHBA) hosted by Sage Creek Equestrian. Jim and Donnette Hicks have generously offered their facility, their extensive history of working with Mustangs, as well as their truly remarkable horsemanship skills to create a unique two day event of entertainment, education, and awareness. For more information please visit our web site at:

www.iwhba.org



Stud on Cedar Mtn. HMA

Summer Training Series

Last years Summer Training Series was a great success.

We again offered the bomb proofing aspect by setting up an obstacle course. Aces Wild was required to attend the bomb proofing session and found it to be a great foundation experience for parade season.

We had a couple who attended for help touching their horse for the first time, picking up feet, trailer loading, saddling, mounting & riding.

In keeping with this, IWHBA and Flying T Acres will again offer the Summer Training Series to anyone who would like to attend. The horse doesn't even

have to be a former wild horse or burro. The only thing required is the willingness to listen and learn.

For more information visit our web site at www.iwhba.org

Volunteer Opportunities

IWHBA is a volunteer 501(c)3 corporation who could not exist without all of our volunteers and the countless hours they spend in support of IWHBA.

There will be numerous opportunities for you to volunteer again this year. We need volunteers for the following:

- Learning Center starting in February this year (yes I know it is early and still very cold).

- We will also be looking for volunteers to staff information/sales booths for IWHBA at the Utah Horse Expo, Utah Wild Horse & Burro Festival and BLM adoptions.

BLM will be needing volunteers for the following:

- Information booths at the Utah Horse Expo, various county fairs and the State Fair.

- They will also need volunteers to help out with various aspects of the Utah Wild Horse & Burro Festival.

If you can be of assistance with any of these please contact Janet Tipton with your information so I can put you on the list.

I can be reached at:

IWHBA@wirelessbeehive.com

or 801.554.4431

Summer Training Series Schedule

June 16 & 17

Ground Manners

Picking up feet

July 7 & 8

Obstacle/bomb proofing

Ground driving

August 18 & 19

Introduction to saddle

September 8 & 9

First Ride

2007—3rd Annual Wild Horse Festival of Learning

The 3rd Annual Wild Horse Festival of Learning will be again held at the South Jordan Equestrian Center—May 15-18. This year's clinicians will be **Chris Erlon**-Red Rock, TX; **Cliff Tipton**-Erda, UT; **Rick & Kitty Lauman**-Prineville, OR; **Lesley Neuman**-Rescue, CA.

For a schedule of events, clinician bio's and registration information please log on to our web site at:

www.iwhba.org

Intermountain Wild Horse & Burro Advisors, Inc.

4912 N. Hazel Circle
Erda, UT 84074

Phone: 435.843.7465
Cell: 801.554.4431
E-mail: iwhba@wireleebeehive.com

We're on the Web:

www.iwhba.org



Intermountain Wild Horse & Burro Advisors, Inc is a non-profit corporation with 501(c)(3) status, working in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Our purpose is to educate the general public on wild-born horse issues through the implementation of programs, which reinforce the need for preservation, protection, and management while promoting a more positive image of the wild-born horse.

We provide support and mentoring to those persons who have or will adopt wild-born horses from the Bureau of Land Management or any other agency or organization, which makes wild-born horses available to the general public.

This support and mentoring is made available through the implementation of training and mentoring programs that educate adopters and future adopters in learning the skills and methods of gentling and handling wild-born horses using natural horsemanship techniques.

These programs are offered for the development of a positive relationship between horse and human leading to the long-term success of wild-born adoption programs.

IWHBA Officers

Vicky Green, President
Jackie Glanville, Vice-President
Janet Tipton, Secretary/Treasurer

Aces Wild – All Wild Horse & Burro Drill Team

Aces Wild – an All Wild Horse & Burro Drill Team was formed in 2005 by adopters/volunteers of the BLM's Wild Horse & Burro Program to help promote/increase adoptions around the state of Utah. The team has performed at the Utah Horse Expo, the Utah Wild Horse & Burro Festival, Thanksgiving Point and parades across the state from Morgan to Kanab.

In 2005 the team took 2nd place in the West Jordan Western Stampede parade in the equine division and in 2006 Aces took 1st place in the Sandy City 4th of July parade in the equine division.

IWHBA is once again proud to

sponsor the Aces Wild in 2007.

Please come on out and support them by cheering them on. If you have a parade in your area that you would like to see the team perform at please let us know and we will do our best to get the team in it.

Aces is also looking for more members to join the team. If

you are interested in getting involved with the Aces Wild and perhaps do not currently have a mustang ready to participate, or have a green horse that you are unsure of, the team may still have options for you, please contact Vicky Green at

vgreen@xmission.com or

801.694.3301

or Jackie Glanville at

jglanville@earthlink.net

801.821.0333

Aces Wild



Aces Wild prior to their performance at the Hooper 4th of July celebration.

Scheduled Appearances

March 9-11

Utah Horse Expo

3/9 - 12:30

3/10 – 10:00 & 3:00

3/11 – 10:00 & 4:00

March 23

Tribute to a Wild Born Legacy

May 19

Utah Wild Horse & Burro Festival