

ISPMB  
SUMMER  
2024  
NEWSLETTER

Correspondence  
May 20, 1972  
Dear Annie,  
We are sending you a check  
for \$3.53. This is their pride and  
joy and they certainly enjoy  
and they certainly enjoy  
me to operate it.  
Last month the children  
made a little over \$15.00.  
I would like to have a horse

International Society for the Protection of Mustangs & Burros



Spirit of the Ancients

Wild Horse Annie  
In loving memory of  
Velma B. Johnston  
June 27, 1977

# WILD HORSE & BURRO DIARY

A Publication of the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros  
The Oldest Wild Horse and Burro Organization in the United States



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# President's REPORT

*Learning from Annie to  
fight for what we know is true*

By Karen A. Sussman

## ISPMB's Rare Spanish Gila Herd *Crucial to Understanding Herd Behavior*

Over the past 20 years, this Spanish herd has given ISPMB so much information through our observation of them about how to properly manage wild horses. Untouched for 50 years prior to coming to ISPMB, they have been our teachers and they continue to teach. Their growth rate has been approximately 8 percent yearly, matching some scientists quoted in the 1980 National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report who disputed the near-20 percent yearly growth rate that the Agencies had adopted. These scientists believed the growth rate would be less than 10 percent, and the Gila Herd's growth aligns with these predictions.

The information that this very important Gila Herd has given us offers significant application to the Heber Herd of Northern Arizona in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest. Thus, every issue we ask that you call Secretary Tom Vilsack and ask that the Heber Herd be studied for the next 7 to 10 years. We know that in doing so, management of wild horses can be TRANSFORMED.

We have dedicated this issue to our Heroine, ISPMB's first president, Wild Horse Annie, as a reminder "that one person can CHANGE the world!"

We must always remember this and understand that by working together the power for change grows!

ISPMB is on a very difficult path, just as Annie was in her early days. Annie saved our wild horses and burros from slaughter. Now, ISPMB must save them again by advocating for management practices that recognize and prioritize the wild horses' and burros' role in ecological balance on the public lands.

ISPMB is the only organization advocating for leaving family bands intact over many years because these horses limit their own growth. However, every four years many herds are rounded up, destroying these very important stable band structures and creating chaos in these herds.

Please help us create a positive outcome for all our wild horses and burros. Please call Secretary Vilsack at 202-720-3631 and request the Heber horses be studied.

**YOUR DONATION WILL KEEP  
"YOUR" GILA HERD RUNNING FREE**

### WILD HORSE & BURRO DIARY | Summer 2024 | Volume 64 Issue No. 1

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**Cover:** This image appeared in the Wild Horse and Burro Diary, a publication for the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros, date unknown, with the inscription: "In loving memory of Velma Johnston (Wild Horse Annie), June 27, 1977. With determination and courage, she saved a rich part of our western heritage from becoming lifeless history - the wild horses and burros."

The cover signifies the importance of Annie's request to the public, especially children, to participate in a letter-writing campaign supporting wild horses and burros. Congress received the largest outpouring of letters in its history, second only to the Vietnam War. It was a big reason why the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act passed without one dissenting vote in both houses of Congress.

In researching many of ISPMB's historical files in preparing for the dedication of this magazine to Wild Horse Annie, I am reminded by her words, acts of extreme bravery, and love for the land and its magnificent horses and burros. That the land should be for all Americans and not just for a few commercial interests that benefited only those few. She has reminded me of how important it is that ISPMB continues to be heard now amongst the multitude of nearly 100 other organizations that support wild horses. (There were only two when Annie started and only four when I became involved in the wild horse movement in 1981.)

Her reminder to me is loud and clear, "Fight with facts and truth until our last breath." This is exactly what she did in her last months on this earth. I know she would be proud of ISPMB and our efforts to transform management of wild horses on public lands. This could only happen because of the years of dedication in understanding two of our herds that had not been rounded up in 50 years until ISPMB accepted them into our conservation program. Then add an additional 18 years in which they remained intact giving us extremely important data.

What I learned from our Gila herd is that they worked together for the good of the whole herd and most importantly they limited their own growth because their band structures had not been disturbed from being rounded up in more than 50 years. Stallions prevented young fillies from being bred too early. This was a joint effort by the family band stallions! This was so amazing to watch.

While the majority of wild horse groups (about 99 percent) support giving birth control to our wild horses, who can limit their own growth when undisturbed, we are fighting to bring this information to light and moving forward as Annie would. We will succeed!

During Annie's day, she was bothered when the animal groups did not cooperate together to work for the best solutions to save wild horses and burros. Annie predicted the wild horses and burros would suffer when we, as groups, are not united.

If one looks at the livestock industry, both private and public lands ranchers stick together through thick and thin. They continue to have a very powerful lobby in Congress.

This is why it is critical that the Heber herd becomes a "study" herd because they exhibit the same growth patterns as ISPMB's two herds. This is so crucial to the survival of our wild horses on public lands that it must be shouted to the

hilltops! This is the very last herd on public lands that has not been rounded up in 20 years or more. ISPMB will do everything in our power to make sure they are not rounded up but are studied instead.

So, each publication, I will continue to ask you to call Secretary Vilsack who has the authority with the stroke of a pen to order them a study herd. It is their behaviors that must be understood. It is my understanding that those beautiful behaviors may be so disrupted in the herds that are rounded up every four years that they may no longer be practiced. We would expect that once stability exists, over time these behaviors will once again evolve. The next chapter in ISPMB's progress is to study this phenomenon in our Gila horses of which we have seven years of current data. Roundups destroy the family structures and the close bond that these families have, exhibiting their years and years of knowledge that they carry with them. Only time without roundups can heal them. They did not survive for nearly 60 million years without adapting and retaining their knowledge of ancient times.

I want to close with some more intimate tidbits from Annie and who she really was. First, she was a really dignified woman, a true lady, who dressed with a hat, gloves, and suit when she testified before Congress or met the public at meetings. What you likely did not know is that she had to carry a gun because her life was continually threatened. When she answered her door she had a gun behind her back, she slept with a gun under her pillow and, what maybe no one knows, is that she had her pistol strapped to her leg under her dress when she testified before Congress! Something that could not be done today.

She was asked her preferred name as she was known as Wild Horse Annie. Here is what she reported. "My mother and dad gave me my name Velma, my husband bestowed upon me my last name Johnston, but my honored name is Wild Horse Annie and by golly, I earned it!"

**While ISPMB continues on the "road less traveled," we know we are on the right road—the one that Annie would have taken! It is a lonely road at times but it is the road of TRUTH.**

*To our heroine, Annie. Her moccasins can never be filled, but we will walk in her path.*

Karen A. Sussman  
President, ISPMB



Without Wild Horse Annie's tireless devotion, there may not have been any wild horses or burros left in our country today.



*This is dedicated to all children in our country and throughout the world who want to learn more about Annie and her valiant efforts in hope that they will be empowered by the belief that they too can change the world and make it a better place for all living things.*

*With love and dedication to my heroine whose moccasins can never be filled.*

Karen A. Sussman,  
president ISPMB

# Wild Horse Annie

## Our Heroine & ISPMB's First President

### *The Story of Her Bold Crusade*

All Americans owe the survival of wild horses and burros on the North American plains to this magnificent woman who dedicated her life to end their inhumane treatment and slaughter.

With nearly three decades of hard work and dedication, Wild Horse Annie's dream was realized, that future generations would have the pleasure of seeing wild horses galloping across the plains with manes and tails flying in the wind, nostrils flared, and eyes reflecting their wild spirit, their freedom.

Wild Horse Annie rose up against tremendous odds to achieve one of the greatest accomplishments in American history, the ideology that one person can change the world! She brought much needed attention to our country that our public lands are not just for the vested interest groups but that they belong to all the people of the United States. From her early effort spawned other legislation that resulted in furthering the protection of public lands such as the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

Annie's crusade began in 1950 and would end in 1977 upon her death. Annie wrote: "Although I had heard that airplanes were being used to capture mustangs, like so many of us do when something does not touch our lives directly, I pretended it did not concern me. But one morning in the year 1950, my own apathetic attitude was jarred into acute awareness. What had now touched my life was to reach into the lives of many others as time went on."

On a usual day driving to work, a truck hauling horses cut in front of Annie's car. She noticed a stream of blood dripping from the truck. Shocked by the trail of blood, Annie followed the truck to a rendering plant. This day would forever change her life. Hiding behind a bush, Annie noted a yearling, tucked between two stallions, down in the truck. The yearling was being trampled to death by horses packed like sardines awaiting their eventual demise in the rendering plant. She was outraged by this act of cruelty and set out to change the course of America's history preventing the eradication of wild horses from public lands.

Annie was born Velma Bronn on March 5, 1912 in Reno, Nevada. Her parents were Joseph Bronn and Gertrude Clay. Velma was the oldest of four children, three girls and a boy. She was 5'7" tall and weighed a mere 110 pounds. Her youngest sister, Betty Jo Larson, described Annie as a perfectionist, a genius, and a tough taskmaster with enormous integrity.

In 1923, at the age of 11, Annie contracted polio and became disfigured from being in a body cast for six months. She coped with her disabilities by becoming strong in her academics and spending much time working with the animals on her parent's ranch. She wrote poetry and enjoyed drawing. Because of the cruelty inflicted by some of the children in her class, Velma's mother instilled a strong sense of honesty within her and the attitude of staying as happy as she can.

Velma often boasted that she had wild horse blood in her veins, thanks to her father Joe. The story is told that when Joe's family moved from Nevada to California in the mid-1800s in a covered wagon that inclement weather conditions drastically reduced rations for the family. A once-wild range mare and her foal traveled alongside the wagon with other livestock. Mrs. Bronn, in her weakened condition, could not provide enough milk for baby Joe to sustain him. It was the range mare's milk that supplemented Joe and saved his life.

Mr. Gordon Harris, an insurance broker, who had his own firm, employed Velma as his executive secretary for 40 years. Mr. Harris was one of Annie's devoted supporters along with her mother and her husband, Charlie Johnston.

Annie met Charlie while visiting her father at the Washoe General Hospital. Both Charlie and her father were patients and shared a room together. It was there that Velma fell in love with this 6'4" West Virginian who was a part Delaware Indian. They moved to a 16-acre lot in Wadsworth, Nevada and built their dream place known as the Double Lazy Heart Ranch.

Unable to have children, Velma and Charlie opened their ranch to children of friends from all over the state. There they kept a supply of horses for the young people. Their love for each other became the strength and courage that Velma would draw upon in her crusade to stop the extermination of our country's great heritage, our last living symbols of the Old West, the wild horses and burros.



**Left:** Gertrude and Joseph Bronn pictured with their children Velma (top) and Jack (below) one year before Velma contracted polio. Velma and her younger brother Jack were in a San Francisco pediatric hospital for a long time, attended to by their mother Gertrude. Velma was 10-years-old in this photo. Her brother died from pneumonia unrelated to Velma's polio.



**Right:** Velma's strength was in defying those who would term her a 'cowgirl' from the 'Wild West.' She always dressed as a professional woman, which she was, especially when she addressed the public, Congress or any diplomats. Her power came from who she was in her heart and soul, not from creating a perceived image for the public.



How Annie succeeded

Annie was a charismatic leader. As she entered a room, opponents melted at her presence. She was always dressed as a lady and yet her soft words would reverberate like thunder through the souls of those who encountered her. Sierra magazine writer Harold Walter wrote, “History is made in many odd ways. It is unusual that a peaceful Nevada woman should have stirred the world to the diminishing beat of the wild mustang herds. She made the defiant scream of the stallions a trumpet of protest.”

A UPI correspondent wrote of his meeting with Annie. Calling Annie to set up a meeting, he told her to “ham it up... We want to see you in your guns and western outfit.” Upon meeting Annie, he said, “I buckled on my fountain pen and galloped through the Capitol canyons to the office of Representative Walter Baring (D-Nevada). I was feeling uneasy about my citified suit and bow tie, and the fact that I wasn’t packing a gun.”

When he met Annie, he said, “I thought for a minute that I had fallen into the wrong company. Here was a slim little lady in a crisp linen sheath, kind of blue-green, with stiletto heels, who laid aside her white gloves and white bag to shake my hands. ‘My ‘hi-ya pardner’ died in my throat. ‘How do you do, mam?’ I managed instead.”

Velma realized that her campaign would not be based on her emotionalism but on strong hard facts. She received that advice from her father who warned Velma that her opponents would try to label her as an “overly emotional female.” After all, it had only been 40 years that women had the right to vote in our country. Women were expected to stay at home, raise a family, and stay out of a man’s world.

Annie reflected on his advice in later years. “You see, because I am a woman, I cannot afford to indulge in anything bordering on the sentimental, lest I be judged over-emotional... There isn’t a thing wrong with emotion. It is a very important part of our lives; but when a woman begins on it, fighting a man’s battle in a man’s world, she has three strikes against her to begin with and I had to learn to talk on that level. What personal feelings I have are something different.”

Velma was sarcastically nicknamed “Wild Horse Annie” by one of her bitterest opponents, Dan Solari, who went on to become an employee of the Montana Bureau of Land Management (BLM). As a constant reminder that her battle would be pitted against hundreds of Solari’s, she insisted that her friends call her Annie. She became affectionately known as Wild Horse Annie.

During the early years of Velma’s campaign, her life was often in danger. When strangers knocked, Velma answered the door with a gun behind her back. After all, they were living in the times of the Wild West! One of Annie’s strongest ranching opponents said he would like to see Annie in a case of dog food. (Over 30 million pounds of wild horsemeat were processed into food for dogs, cats, and chickens during the 1930s alone.)

Commercial exploitation of horses ‘one of the blackest instances’ in our history

Annie’s account of the cruelty inflicted upon the wild ones is very poignant. “The turning point in the story of the wild horse came with the rise of canned dog-and-cat food business, and the demand for fresh horsemeat sold in pet shops. Once the big slaughter got under way, the wild horse was doomed, for there was no protective laws whatever. Several methods were used in capturing the animals, but the one most popular and effective from the point of view of the horsemeat hunters (mustangers) followed along these lines: The old technique of rounding up horses with crews of hard-riding cowboys was too slow and too costly, so the airborne cowboy came into being.

“The mustangs are driven at breakneck speed by planes, from their meager refuge in the rough and barren rim rock into flatlands or dry lakebeds. There the chase is taken up by hunters standing on fast-moving pickup trucks, and the exhausted mustangs, after a run of 15 to 20 miles speeded by swooping planes, many of them carrying bullet wounds inflicted to make them run the faster, are easy victims for ropers. Once the running horse is roped, a heavy truck tire tied to the other end of the rope is thrown out of the truck. The frantic horse, with his sides heaving and blood running from his nostrils, soon falls exhausted, where his feet are quickly trussed. Another line is then attached to his hind legs and he is pulled up a plank ramp



These images from 1951 in the Nevada desert portray how cruelly wild horses were treated before Annie fought for their protection. Mustangers ran horses for miles in planes and trucks, then roped them and tied them to tires before dragging them into trailers headed for slaughter plants.

into the bed of the truck. The ropes are removed and the animal is prodded to his feet. Frequently the hide is stripped from his side during the drag up the board ramp.

“The main objects of the horse hunters are to deliver the animals to the slaughtering houses in quantity and ambulatory, where they receive from four to six cents per pound. The animals, loaded without regard to size, terrified and injured, are subjected to a long haul out of state. Many are trampled. Others, too badly hurt to load, are left to die from the injuries received in the long pursuit by plane and truck. Young colts are frequently abandoned and starve to death or are killed by predatory animals.”

**Annie witnessed the great spirited mustangs being driven to the most remote regions where shelter, feed, and water was almost non-existent. These gallant untamed spirits would survive there and later would be given this almost useless land as their habitat under the 1971 law.** Annie wrote, “The commercial exploitation of mustangs is one of the blackest instances in the history of our treatment of animals, and that it has been encouraged and allowed to continue is a reflection upon the lethargic people and bureau that have permitted its continuation... the public is becoming fed up with the monopolistic possessive attitude of the users of the public lands.”

All walks of life joined the fight

Annie touched people from all walks of life. As she writes, “As the publicity has become more widespread, and the iniquitous story was revealed in all its brutality and greed, letters began pouring in, and for nearly two years now, no day has passed without its quota of mustang letters. I have answered every one, and have followed up with material and instructions as to how to support Congressman Baring. Offers to help have come from every state, and people in all walks of life have joined the fight – ministers, housewives, students, teachers, sportsmen, the nuns in a convent in the East, a blind man who had read the story in Braille, men in the Armed Forces in far away places, lawyers, doctors and people from all ages – the youngest a potential Miss America of six, and the eldest a one-time cowpoke in his eighties, who could well remember the wild ones he’d ‘broke and rode.’

“As the story filtered into foreign countries, letters bearing exotic postage stamps began to arrive: From Portugal and Spain, the Belgian Congo, Brazil, Porto Rico, the Philippines, Yugoslavia, England, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Cyprus and from our newest state Alaska. A journalist and photographer from a large news agency in Europe came to our ranch to get the story. At least my efforts have accomplished this much: mustang fever is raging!”





© MELISSA FARLOW

Wild horses gallop across Wyoming's Red Desert in the desolate wilderness area of Honeycomb Buttes. The arid high desert located along the rim of the Great Divide Basin is colorful from deposits left by an ancient lake. Horses were seen on an aerial shoot by the photographer. Before The Act was passed and knowing its passage was imminent, wild horses were driven to the most remote areas by powerful livestock-grazing permit holders intent on removing them from their grazing lands.

One of the most unique letters Annie received was from a tribal chief of the Sioux Indians. It was most supportive of Annie's efforts. He offered to bring a band of armed warriors to assist her.

On Jan. 19, 1959, a bill was introduced into Congress by Congressman Baring. The bill was passed into law on Sept. 8, 1959 and was known as the Wild Horse Annie Law (PL 86-234). It prohibited the use of motorized vehicles in the capture of wild horses and prohibited the pollution of water holes for the purposes of trapping horses. Mrs. Johnston maintained that the most powerful opponent to the 1959 bill was the BLM. She contended that the BLM had no interest in prosecuting illicit mustanging operations.

After her successful federal legislation passed, Annie was honored as the first woman to receive the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' Humanitarian of the Year Award. Annie truly believed that her work was over and that she could return to being an extraordinary housewife. Little did she know at that time that her work would continue until her death in 1977. Her speech reflected her gratitude.

"Have you ever wondered how it feels to touch a star? I can pretty well tell you about it now. The feeling is a combination of many things...

"Of exhilaration over the successful accomplishment of a difficult job; of gratitude to all those who have helped to bring it about; of an inability to believe that the long, hard fight is actually over; of a great pride in belonging to a country where it is possible to fight for that in which we believe, and to be granted the right to speak for it to that country's lawmakers.

It is a combination, too, of a deep humility for the love and respect that are written into the hundreds upon hundreds of letters that I have received from my fellow-men; of sincere appreciation from the courtesy, kindness, and consideration that were shown to me by the senators and congressman not only from my own state, but from every state in the union, while I was in Washington, to the extent that not for a moment did I feel unsure, or alone, or far from home; of high regard for the written word in magazines and newspapers, that added its strength in support of our efforts; of unshakable faith in the ability of the individuals to succeed in his endeavors eventually.

"Of a sublime belief in the great capacity of the human mind and heart for goodness and compassion when alerted to the inequities of any kind; **profound joy, because children, little and big in their many different ways, responded to the dire plight of their animal friends - their letters of thanks, misspellings and all, are worthy of a special place in a treasure chest of important things;** of an overwhelming awareness of the truly broad scope of humaneness that is not limited by political or religious affiliations, nor by any of the barriers so common to many of social problems; of a knowledge of the tremendous strength and ability of organizations throughout the country, and their dedication, in the fight to right the wrongs done to those in the animal world; of a peace within that comes with knowing that one small part of this earth is a little better for our having righted the wrong.

"How does it feel to touch a star? It feels real good."

### Annie overcomes personal loss to reach 'victorious plateau'

Annie returned home to Reno to find Charlie ill. They sold their ranch and moved to Greenstone Drive where Annie turned her attention to gardening. "I'd rather garden than do anything I know of. If there's anything to reincarnation - I hope that I'm a gardener the next time around!"

After an eleven and one-half month illness, Charlie passed on, leaving Velma after 27 years of a wonderful marriage. Velma so aptly describes Charlie's attributes. "No one since has cast such a tall shadow. It was he who taught me the infinite patience one must have in his reach toward a star; the courage to fight for that in which he believes; the stoicism to take



Left: Interior Secretary Rogers Morton presents Velma Johnston with the Interior Department's Public Service Award on June 15, 1972.

Right: The Humane Society of the United States awarded its second annual Joseph Wood Krutch Medal to Velma B. Johnston for "her 22-year crusade to save the wild horses and burros of the West from the mustangers who brutally pursued and captured them to sell to pet food manufacturers and rendering plants." Annie, as she liked to be called, is seen with Author Marguerite Henry (left) and HSUS president Coleman Burke at the HSUS Annual Conference in 1972. She accepted, saying, "We the people, can fight for that in which we believe, can appeal to our lawmakers for that which is right and good."



disappointment with a smile; the wisdom to accept the next best thing when the best is unattainable; the importance of always being fair – not only in our marriage but in our relations with others whose paths must cross ours from time to time. Perhaps that was his heritage from a long-ago Indian ancestor... and he shared it with me. Charlie gave me faith in myself and let me know it. I think I must have subconsciously stored them all away in some sort of treasure chest, because when I need that strength from time to time, it is always there.”

It was difficult for Annie to regroup for the last biggest challenge of her lifetime – that of bringing permanent legislation to protect all the wild horses and burros on public lands. Losing Charlie had taken a great toll on Annie. She was encouraged by her friends and by Helen Reilly, her secretary and founder of ISPMB, to not stop until permanent protection was achieved.

Annie wrote, “When Charlie and I were a team, no hill was too high to climb, no challenge too great to tackle. Even that last awful year when we both knew he was dying and we both play-acted it out to the very end just as though we would have each other for years on end, each of us thinking only of the other.

“I suppose I am not using good judgment in taking on so tough a fight at this time for the second time in my life, with limited time, health, finances, and a decade added to my age, but having spent the greater part of the last eighteen years witnessing the unspeakably cruel destiny of the wild ones, it would not be characteristic of me to turn my back on them until the last victorious plateau is reached. God willing, and with the help of all who love them, may that time not be too far away.”

**Annie’s testimony to Congress tells of 10-year struggle against powerful slaughter forces**

On Dec. 15, 1971, Annie’s efforts paid off and The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act was passed unanimously in Congress. The following was her testimony before Congress:

“And it climaxed 10 years of struggle against the powerful forces aligned against any effort to curtail the slaughter–forces comprised of the domestic livestock industry, the target animal industry, and pet food manufacturers, and the Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Land Management – custodian of the public lands – which looked upon the commercial harvesting of the animals as an expedient means of range clearance to make more forage potential available to the vested interest groups. From an estimated two million at the turn of the century, their numbers have been reduced to an estimated 25,000



In October of 1964, The Washington Post published this photo of Annie, her horse Chief and dog Missy, named after the film The Misfits.

in the late 1950s. Even though the burros were not commercially exploited, they fared no better than the horses, and claims of overpopulation and possible competition with other fauna led to systematic extermination programs. In addition, would-be Nimrods have found them to be ideal target practice.

“Decades of bloody and indiscriminate annihilation of wild horses and burros, under the agency’s direction in order to make more grazing land available for domestic livestock, was a black chapter in the history of man’s abuse of animals until an act of Congress in 1959 outlawed that expedient means of ‘management and control.’ It is unlikely the public would support any move to restore a practice that would again, inevitably, lead to over-zealous programs through its very expediency.”

By 1974, Annie was diagnosed with high blood pressure and a heart condition. It was not this condition that would lay Annie to her final resting ground but one more severe and deadly. Annie died of lung cancer on June 27, 1977. ■



*Annie’s Achievements in Legislation*

**1952**

Annie organized the ban of using aircraft to capture horses in Storey County where she resided.

**1955**

A bill, similar to Storey County, was passed in the Nevada legislature that banned aircraft from capturing wild horses, except on public lands, which constituted 86% of Nevada’s lands.

**1959**

The first federal law was passed which prohibited the use of motorized vehicles in the capture of wild horses and prohibited the pollution of water holes for the purposes of trapping horses. [Known as the Wild Horse Annie Law (PL86-234)]

**1971**

Federal legislation that protected wild horses and burros from capture, branding, harassment, or death on public lands. [The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (PL92-195)]

**If we can learn anything from this noble woman who saved our wild horses and burros from extinction, it is this – one person can truly make a difference and change the world. We urge you to take the time and make a difference in our world.**

Karen Sussman, president, ISPMB

*Make a Difference & Give Today to Save Our Wild Horses and Burros*

ARE YOU PUTTING YOUR DOLLARS TO THE BEST USE?  
18 YEARS OF UNDERSTANDING WILD HERD BEHAVIORS HAS LED ISPMB TO KNOW HOW BEST TO MANAGE WILD HORSES.

**YOUR DONATION TODAY WILL HELP US TO  
BRING THIS MESSAGE FORWARD!**





# Annie's Voice: Making a Better World for Wild Horses and Our Public Lands

Wild Horse Annie spoke out on key issues that concerned her – from the importance of ranges dedicated to wild horses and burros to the wrongful blame of wild horses for overgrazing and deteriorated rangeland. It's been more than more than 40 years since Velma discussed these concerns prior to her death in 1977. We can learn from her words today, asking ourselves: Has anything really changed? If not, how can we make change?

## November-December 1968: Initial Meeting, Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range

Velma wrote, "On September 9th, 1968, Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, pursuant to the Classification and Multiple Use Act of September 19, 1964, and subsequent statutes, designated approximately 32,000 acres of public land as the PRYOR MOUNTAIN WILD HORSE RANGE, being a Class III natural environment area under the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation system of classification. Comprising a portion of the Big Horn Canyon National Recreation Area it is subject to valid existing rights and will be primarily administered for the protection and management of wild horses, wildlife, watershed, recreation, archeological and scenic values. Wild horses within the area shall be managed by the Bureau of Land Management in a manner that is compatible with the purposes for which the Big Horn Canyon National Recreational Area was established."



Orphan Annie was the first horse in the United States to be recognized as wild by the BLM. She was tattooed U.S. #1 under her lip.

The Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range was the second range dedicated to wild horses before The Act passed. Velma was so excited because the public could view horses on this one. The first range, established in 1962, was located on Nellis Air Force Base in south-central Nevada and is known as the Nevada Wild Horse Range, which had (and continues to have) restricted access. The third range is located in Colorado at Little Book Cliffs. It was established in 1974 and dedicated to Wild Horse Annie in 1986.

## Annie and ISPMB created concept of today's wild horse adoption program

The dedication of the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range was truly historic. It was here where ISPMB and Annie conceived of an "adoption" program for wild horses. This would prove to be extremely important when the 1971 law passed because the law called for destroying excess wild horses and burros in the field. Each year since 1988, there is a continuing resolution to the Appropriations Act which prevents funding to destroy healthy excess animals or allow sales of animals to be processed into commercial products, preventing this part of the Act from being enforced.



Orphan Annie and Skedaddle were listed in ISPMB's Wild Horses of America Registry as the first and second wild horses registered in the United States. Right: Annie feeds milk to Skedaddle.

The first horse to be removed from the Pryor Mountain Range was given status by the BLM as #1 horse to be recognized as wild. And this first horse was named after Annie – "Orphan Annie." In 1968 Orphan Annie was born and was a twin from a mare on the range. It is rare for wild horses to have twins and usually one will die. The filly was removed by the BLM and given to ISPMB to nurture and care for at ISPMB's ranch in Reno.

Orphan Annie had a tattoo under her top lip which read #1 (and witnessed by Karen Sussman). Looking back, it would have been wonderful to photograph this tattoo for history! (Often racehorses are lip-tattooed – maybe where the BLM got the concept to tattoo her.)

The filly thrived at ISPMB's small ranch. But there were more horses rescued.

This began our country's adoption program for wild horses, the concept created by Annie and ISPMB in 1968. It became the BLM's national program in 1976 known as the Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Program.

The second horse to be adopted and receive recognition was named Skedaddle after the Skedaddle Mountains in Nevada where the BLM found him orphaned after an illegal roundup of wild horses. Skedaddle was brought to ISPMB's office by the BLM and raised in Reno. In 1976, Skedaddle had the biggest opportunity of his life when he was "interviewed"



to become a possible candidate for the Olympic team by equestrian Bruce Davidson, captain of the 1976 Olympic team. Knowing Skedaddle, he was very laid back and nothing seemed to bother him. He was just a sweet 16.1 hands-high horse and truly not an Olympian.

Both these famous horses retired in Scottsdale, Arizona and were cared for in their elder years by ISPMB's third president, Karen Sussman. Both horses were registered #1 and #2 in ISPMB's Wild Horse and Burro Registry created to give recognition to wild horses and burros in our country. Hundreds of horses and burros were registered in ISPMB's registry in its early years.

Joan Bolsinger was a fourth-grade teacher whose students played a very big role in getting the 1971 legislation passed. She taught at Eastwood Elementary School in Roseburg, Oregon. Her students became the foot soldiers in what was dubbed the "pencil war." Ms. Bolsinger played a strategic role in spearheading the movement to protect wild horses. She also testified before Congress.

**Velma's work influenced thousands of children to take action – together they were the first to STOP the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of wild horses in our country with the passage of the 1971 Act. It was not until 2007 that the last domestic horse slaughterhouse was closed in the United States.**

Without the advent of social media during this time, imagine how important it was to put actual pen to paper. Velma wrote scores of letters that influenced so many people within our country but none more than the children. She urged children to write to Congress and even one son of a Congressman at age 11 testified before Congress in support of wild horses. There are hundreds of newspaper clippings in ISPMB's files showing the interest of print media in Velma's tireless efforts to save the "last of America's wild horses and burros."

Velma visited Roseburg, Oregon and was interviewed on the radio. She had come there to visit the children from Eastwood Elementary School who wrote many letters to Washington, D.C. favoring protection of America's wild horses and burros. Velma's letter-writing campaign, including those penned by thousands of children, was designated as one of the largest writing campaigns in the history of Congress at that time.



The dear sweet colt Skedaddle will always be remembered in this painting by elementary school teacher Joan Bolsinger.



News media asks Velma if 1971 Act would be adhered to

"Shortly after the Wild Horse and Burro Act was passed, I was asked if I believed it could be effectively administered, and my reply was that it all depended on attitudes... attitudes of those actually involved in administering the Act, including those at the field level. Subsequent developments have confirmed that opinion. An early specific example is the occurrence at the BLM District level near Howe, Idaho in February 1973." *(Velma was speaking about the field level BLM person who gave permission for an illegal roundup of 60 wild horses in Howe, Idaho by local cattlemen. This roundup drove many of the horses over a tall cliff causing brutal deaths and substantial injuries. There were only 19 survivors of this horrific roundup, and they were found and pulled from Crown Prince Pet Food slaughter plant in North Platte, Nebraska awaiting "execution" for pet food. Many of these were badly hurt, according to Velma. A court battle ensued. Velma did not have confidence in the leadership of the Bureau. She had always wanted the horses managed by the National Park Service.*

"Attitudes of those who are in other responsible positions from whom the news media draws its information are of vital significance as well, and when their highly exaggerated, negative and unsubstantiated statements are quoted in news releases, they serve only to add fuel to an already volatile situation, while at the same time disregarding the fact that the Act calls for the protection of wild horses and burros, as well as their management and control," she said.

"Because we are meeting here in Oregon today, where a large number of the negative news stories, magazine articles and opinions originate, I shall direct my comments to the situation in this State. I do not mean to infer that it is not equally true in other areas."

Velma speaks out to protect the rangelands

This Amendment to the Organic Act was very important to Annie. It apparently did not pass because it was corrupted by the House of Representatives. The Act was established in 1916 and created the National Park Service. It is considered the "Magna Carta" of our national park system. It still serves our land well in spite that it is over 100 years old. Essentially, park lands were to remain pristine and natural, one reason that Annie wanted the NPS to manage wild horses. They were not to be used for commercial interests like BLM and FS lands were.

"Overwhelming as the temptation sometimes is to let emotion override our common sense, results of our involvement is proof that our only concern is for the welfare of wild horses and burros, other wildlife, and preservation of the public land resource without which man himself, along with all other creatures dependent upon it, cannot survive.

"We have gone on record publicly and through our elected officials in support of the sweeping range management programs currently being undertaken and in so doing have earned for ourselves the enmity of those vested interest users of our national resource lands who are being required, at long last, to curtail their rape of our land. We have come out in strong support of the Senate-passed Organic Act, and in vehement opposition to the house committee's emasculated version. We plan to continue in our cooperative role."



Velma B. Johnston

“ Until the entire situation is placed in perspective, and careful thought is given to dissemination of information; until negative attitudes become more objective; until cooperation replaces competition, animosity will continue to be generated and nothing will be gained, with the national resource land becoming the ultimate irrevocable loss. ”



Has overgrazing changed since 1976?

In a letter written to the chairman and members of the National Advisory Board on Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros on June 4, 1976, Velma wrote:

“The purpose of my statement today is an effort to seek your help in putting into perspective the many and varied opinions on PL-92-195 that are making their appearance in newspapers, magazines, and publications, many of them official. It is my hope that it will stimulate you, in your deliberations, to carefully weigh the inconsistencies in the many answers we receive to our questions.”

Velma takes issue with official publications

“The article ‘Status Report on the Wild Horse on the National Resource Lands’ appearing in the Spring issue of OUR PUBLIC LANDS, a publication of the United States Department of the Interior, while understandably pointing up the difficult task facing national resource administrators who are in the position of attempting to reverse the accelerating downtrend in the productivity of public land, is an example of the prevailing negative approach in its presentation of the situation in this State. It has brought to mind a number of questions that could well be asked, and to which there has already been a disturbing inconsistency in the answers.” She is talking about Oregon and this is written as she wrote it.

“The article opens this way: ‘Last January, cattlemen in the Burns, Oregon area got some bad news. The news was that they wouldn’t be allowed to graze as many cattle on public range lands as usual this Summer, and that the grazing period permitted could be shortened by as much as two months. The reason? Because overgrazing by wild horse herds has reduced forage on both private and public range land to such a low level that there isn’t enough food for either horses or cattle.’ The underlining is mine, to emphasize the point I am making.”

“Well, the article is correct in that there isn’t enough food, and this creates critical problems for all users, but we disagree completely that the responsibility for deteriorated ranges lies with the wild horse herds and that the depredation has

occurred in the short period of time since enactment of the 1971 Law. Confirmation of our position is readily available in the indictment of the BLM by BLM in its Task Force investigation into grazing practices released in 1974 which, while dealing specifically with my own state of Nevada, points to other investigations showing ‘similar or more serious conditions in other Western states’.

“We cannot condone misrepresentations, unjustifiable reductions or negative attitudes when they appear to make wild horses and burros scapegoats:

- For a situation that existed long before any law passed in behalf of these animals;
- For lack of proper management;
- Or to cover for the tendency to favor interests oriented toward consumptive uses of the public land which return short term economic benefits to the relative few, while short-change the many whose interest are not of an economic nature.”

Velma followed with another page defending her above position with facts and closed with this statement:

“It is the foregoing type of information dissemination that leads to distorted opinions and a dangerously high degree of animosity among all interests involved in national resource land use and preservation. It is now that we should all work together in a positive approach to carrying out what is a clear mandate of the public...protection, management and control of wild horses and burros, keeping in mind always the necessity to reduce ALL pressure on our public land resources so that something of the privileges we have enjoyed will be there for future generations.

“Until the entire situation is placed in perspective, and careful thought is given to dissemination of information; until negative attitudes become more objective; until cooperation replaces competition, animosity will continue to be generated and nothing will be gained, with the national resource land becoming the ultimate irrevocable loss.” ■







Velma B. Johnston

## Family and Friends Remember Velma

### VELMA'S ELDEST NIECE

*'She was a woman before her time'*

By Trudy Larson - MD, Retired Professor and Founding Dean, School of Public Health, University of Nevada, Reno

Velma Johnston was known widely as Wild Horse Annie but for me, she was always Aunt Velma. She was the oldest sister of my mother, Betty Jo. Velma was the only woman in the family who worked outside the home. She was an exceptionally talented executive secretary and during my visits to Reno, she made it a point to take us to her work and then to an elegant lunch after. We had to dress up and I remember vividly one year when she introduced me to lobster thermidor (still a favorite).

It was important training for each of her nieces who all went on to careers that necessitated manners and conversation. Her professionalism and attention to detail at work were very evident, even to a young girl, and painted a very positive picture of successful women doing important work. At home, she enjoyed doing art with us and sharing her creative talents. She designed her Reno home, after the move in from the Double Lazy Heart ranch, and it was a masterpiece of style and functionality.

She was a very fine seamstress, a necessity for her to be able to make clothes that fit her, and every year she would make us beautiful (and matching) dresses for Easter. Her house was full of color, and everything matched. It was an apt metaphor for Velma... organized, bold, creative, and deliberate.

She was a loving and giving aunt, but we all knew boundaries and rules at her house. She clearly used these talents during her amazing career as "Wild Horse Annie" to cajole, politely but firmly ask, tell the truth and do it all with a great deal of class. It was hard for us to really comprehend that our aunt was also an icon and heroine to so many. However, her purposeful work to protect and defend wild horses was a wonderful inspiration for us and for me, in particular. She never let the word "No" stop her and it was an important lesson for me as I became a physician in the days when there were not very many women in medicine.

I always picture her perfectly dressed from head to shoes, standing tall and firmly telling her audience (wherever that might have been) about the wild horses and their plight and clearly letting them know what they had better do and do it quickly.

### VELMA'S SECOND ELDEST NIECE

*'She never let the word no stop her'*

By Mary E. Popish

Aunt Velma is what I knew her by. She was the creative Aunt who could create anything she wanted whether it was a beautiful outfit for one of us to wear, a wonderful poem for our birthdays, helping me make Christmas gifts in ceramics or wrapping gifts so beautifully that you hated to open them.

It wasn't until later that I realized what else she did. You see I didn't see her as disfigured from Polio she was my Aunt, but I could see the physical pain she endured and later realized the emotional pain too. She was a woman before her time, secretly married for one year so she could continue working at the bank, a job needed to help provide for their home.

An executive secretary who climbed the ranks of this organization that did so much to help bring recognition to their invaluable contributions to businesses. A wonderful partner with her husband to create a safe place for kids to visit to see the beauty of the Nevada desert and the incredible animals that lived there including the Mustangs.

I feel that part of her journey after seeing that terrible sight of Mustangs being mistreated and taken to slaughter had to be impacted by the horrible time she spent in the hospital in a body cast trying to keep from losing her life to Polio. I'm sure when she was finally able to go back to school the teasing and taunts from others had to be so difficult to deal with. She did not let this time define who she was, when she saw an injustice she had to find a way to stop it. Imagine a woman, slight in stature, going up against Cattlemen and Legislators in an era when women were expected to stay home.

That strength and desire to do what was right was an inspiration to me. She showed what a Strong Woman could accomplish when determined to do right. Yet, that strong determined woman would take time out to be with us nieces when we spent time at her house. I am not sure how she fit everything in a day, working full time, fighting for the Mustangs, and getting laws changed while being there for us. Her mind was so sharp, I'm not sure if she had a photographic memory but I know her memory was keen. Many know her as Wild Horse Annie, but to me she will always be my Aunt Velma.



Left: Karen Sussman and Mary Popish with ISPMB's Gila herd in the background in 2019.



Right: Mary Popish communes with ISPMB's Gila Herd.



This healthy mustang pair from the Pine Nut Mountains of western Nevada owes much of its vigor and joie-de-vivre to the biodiverse life community found here including some of the West's purest and most extensive Pinyon Pine groves which provide important shelter from storms and wind as well as hiding places for safety.

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## VELMA'S ELDEST NEPHEW

*'The ranch was a great place to go for me and some friends'*

By Jack McElwee

My name is Jack McElwee and I am the nephew of Velma Johnston and I was contacted by Karen Sussman about the time I spent at Velma and Charlie's ranch when I was growing up.

My dad was a Navy pilot landing and taking off from aircraft carriers during a 34-plus year career. Because we traveled so much and because my grandmother lived in Reno, my dad and mom would let me come back to Reno during summer recess so that I could spend time with our family. I stayed with my grandma during the week and on weekends would go to the ranch with Aunt Velma and Uncle Charlie. All of this took place while I was in grade school and Jr. high school. I am 81 years old now so the experiences I had back then are a distant memory.

The ranch was a great place to go for me and some friends I was able to share these experiences with. Velma always limited us to two at a time because the ranch house was small and had limited sleeping arrangements. The ranch house was L-shaped and painted white and had a square lawn in the middle of the L. There was also a barn, corral, and about 14 acres of alfalfa for the livestock.

We left Reno on Friday evenings and it took about 45 minutes to get to the ranch. They had three horses (Hobo, Velma's horse, Foxy, Charlie's horse, and Ranger, a mustang they had acquired) and usually Charlie had a couple of the horses saddled up so we could take a ride before dinner. We didn't spend much time talking about work or the mustangs that Velma was involved with. Most of our time was spent riding horses, target shooting and exploring the country side. Velma was a good cook and she would prepare crawfish and frog legs on occasion.

Once in a while we would help Charlie with the alfalfa harvest. He cut, raked it into shocks and then we hauled the shocks to the haystack near the barn.

It was a fun time in my life and something I'll never forget.

## WILD HORSE ANNIE'S ATTORNEY

*'Annie and I traveled to Washington, D.C. for the hearing on the case before the Supreme Court'*

By David R. Belding, ISPMB Council Circle member

David was born and grew up in Las Vegas, Nevada. His early years were spent in southern Nevada, including summer visits to grandparents in Reno. He enjoyed camping with his family on public lands in central Nevada and hunting with his father in northern Nevada. During those trips throughout Nevada, they would occasionally see wild horses and burros on the ranges. Little did David know at that time that his path in life would lead him to "a direct involvement with these magnificent creatures."

After finishing law school at Georgetown University Law Center, he moved to Carson City, Nevada, and clerked for the Nevada Supreme Court. He then moved to Reno and began working for a law firm for Nevada state senator Cliff Young, who was known for giving impassioned pleas on the Senate floor. Young also served as president of the National Wildlife Federation.

*In David's words:*

Shortly after beginning my law practice, I met Velma "Wild Horse Annie" Johnston, a firm client. She instructed me, as she did others, to call her Annie. After meeting Annie, I researched the firm's files and learned of her tireless efforts, which led to the federal legislation passed in 1959 known as the Wild Horse Annie Law. This federal law prohibited motorized vehicles (helicopters and trucks) from capturing wild horses and prohibited the pollution of water holes for the purpose of trapping the horses.

Annie's next tireless efforts led to the enactment in 1971 of The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act. This federal legislation protected wild horses and burros from capture, branding, harassment, or death on public lands.

I immediately began working with Annie on a case named Kleppe v. State of New Mexico. This case was pending before the United States Supreme Court and involved the New Mexico Livestock Board. The Board had rounded up and was selling 19 unbranded burros from BLM land. BLM demanded the return of the burros, and the State of New Mexico filed suit, alleging that the 1971 act was unconstitutional. New Mexico argued that the federal government did not have the power to control animals on federal lands unless they were items in interstate commerce or were causing damage to public lands.

Annie and I traveled together to Washington, D.C. for the hearing on the case before the United States Supreme Court. While on Capitol Hill, we met with the members of the Nevada Congressional delegation. Annie had worked with these members closely over the years on the 1959 and 1971 laws and issues involving the BLM.

It was a pleasure and privilege to accompany this petite, gracious, and charismatic lady. Over the years, Annie was effective not because of any emotionalism but because she was always armed with strong hard facts.

In 1976 the United States Supreme Court delivered its unanimous opinion written by Justice Thurgood Marshall. The Court ruled that the 1971 Act was constitutional and that Congress has the complete power to regulate and protect the wildlife living there.

Never in my life was I happier delivering a message than when I called Annie with the news about this decision. With this ruling by the Court, I believe Annie felt that her lifetime of work was rewarded.



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WILDLIFE ECOLOGIST

Working with Annie led to deep-rooted Nevadan’s true calling

By Craig Downer, ISPMB Council Circle member

Craig Carpenter Downer’s Nevada ancestors date from the mid-1800s and he grew up observing nature and wild horse herds with his parents and family and friends in the vast open spaces near their homes. He was thrilled to encounter wild horses as a boy. This occurred either on foot or while riding his trusty chestnut stallion Poco. He also saw them while assisting his dad and brother in their civil engineering work, e.g. land surveys. This familiarized him with the 40x15-mile Pine Nut Mountains, where the wild horses roamed, Carson Valley, the Sierras and a number of other fascinating desert mountains and valleys in western Nevada and eastern California. While earning his Bachelor’s at UC-Berkeley, Craig began a field study of the Pine Nut mustangs, and by the time he entered graduate school at UN-Reno, he had decided to focus on wild horses, which led him to seek out Wild Horse Annie and to offer his help.

Shortly after the passage of the WFHBA in 1971, he offered his help in the cause at Velma Johnston’s office near the brisk, rapidly flowing Truckee River in downtown Reno.

As he recalls:

They gave me a most friendly greeting and were delighted at my offer. Velma outlined a number of tasks for me to accomplish, including field studies of the herds and their habitats, talks at schools and UN-Reno, meetings with reporters. And I incorporated all this into my graduate studies. She was quite sharp and ran a tight ship, with meticulously ordered files, and by instructing her collaborators to take copious notes describing every horse and its band and to get quality pictures of them. These were to include time and place, behavior, band numbers, distinguishing characteristics of the individual horses and their bands, with an identification of the lead stallions and mares, number of foals, yearlings, and age categories and fitness condition of all band members. **Her goal was to trace the life history of each clearly identified horse/burro and not treat them as a mere number. She emphasized our becoming keenly observant naturalists in order to justify the place of the “wild ones” in Nature.**

I went on a number of forays with Annie’s coworker Dawn Lappin in central and eastern Nevada. One I distinctly remember concerned public springs that were illegally barricaded to prevent wild horses/burros from getting a drink. We went there to assure that the wild horses/burros and their survival needs were protected by exposing wrong-doing. Dawn taught me how to make our presence known so that rural communities would be aware that there are capable people who watch out for the wild horses and burros and their legal habitats.

Velma maintained extensive contacts throughout Nevada and the West. These formed an efficient network that monitored the various herds and their habitats. But she warned me to be careful. Sometimes there are times to speak out, she would say, as in certain wild-horse-friendly old hotels or community halls; but at other times, such as when we were far out on the range in remote areas, she advised me to be extremely careful. With her help, I became a more knowledgeable and effective defender of the wild horses and burros and their rightful land and freedom. And this has become a true calling throughout my life.

Velma once reminded me of the saying: “Fools rush in where angels fear to tread,” and cautioned me about being too naïve with the wild horse enemies. She said I would not be a happy camper if I were to find myself thrown to the bottom of some remote mine shaft by some ruthless person who wants the wild horses gone. Definitely, I took her warning seriously, as I had heard about her close calls and even death threats. Still, I was not to be intimidated and have continued to speak out and stand up for the wild horses and burros throughout my life.

Velma came across as being a very genuine and perceptive lady. She didn’t put on airs but was direct and to the point. While she didn’t try to overwhelm others with her importance, she did insist on being respected for who she was and what she stood for. She was a lady with a mission and maintained her focus on helping the wild horses in the wild and stopping their cruel elimination and the perverse denial of their rightful land and freedom. Though she had cowboy ways, she didn’t adulate the cowboy culture. I remember her saying: “When the ranchers turned their backs on the wild horses and burros

and the law protecting them... that’s when the sun set on the cowboy.”

This I felt to be true because how they behaved was and remains very dishonorable. They just haven’t sufficiently searched their souls to find within themselves the superior reasons that would spur their willingness to share the land and freedom with these magnificent animals at viable herd numbers in commensurate viable habitats: This would be to honor the true spirit and intent of the unanimously passed WFHBA.

According to Annie, ranchers and other wild horse enemies were getting too big for their britches - too powerful! She believed this was a great danger that threatened many positive qualities about America, including our democracy, our sense of decency and fairness, our sense of compassion for our fellow creatures, and our ability to learn important lessons from our past history, including from past mistakes— a major challenge! Based on sound scientific evidence, she firmly believed

horses are native species in North America and restore and enhance many ecosystems here and that much the same can be said of the burros. She was a sharp cookie, having a broad knowledge and being attuned to what was going on, including politically.

Like many deeply rooted Nevadans, inured to garish casinos, she was not taken in by big, brazen displays and warned us not to be fooled, or taken in, by them. She treated us respectfully and urged us to be genuine and true to our individual selves and to honor what we feel deep down within is most important in life. To her, as to us, humanity’s learning to share the land and freedom with truly natural and viable populations of wild horses and burros was tantamount!

I worked with Annie from around the WFHBA’s passage in 1971 until I went into the Peace Corps in 1977, shortly before she passed on. And I greatly appreciated her letter of recommendation for me to work as a wildlife ecologist in the fabulous nation of Colombia, as well as her writing the forward of my first book “Wild Horses: Living Symbols of Freedom” (1977).

Annie beautifully identified with the West and her home in Storey County, the first county in the country to pass a law protecting the wild horses, in large part due to their proven ability to mitigate and prevent destructive wildfires. And she especially identified with the wild mustangs who had been living here since the 1800s but whose ancestors had lived here for millions of years. Seeing how base people with seared consciences were treating these graceful and benign, highly evolved beings in horse form was inconsistent with her vision for life in Nevada and in the West and greatly moved her to stop this outrageous wrong and to institute a much better standard and way of life.

I found a kindred spirit in Annie, as did my dear parents, Bob and Alice, who also collaborated in the wild horse and burro cause along with that of Native Americans. We must uphold the true and noble intent of the laws Annie spearheaded and not compromise away their integrity. ■



Craig Downer and his chestnut stallion Poco are seen in his field by the historic Helen Henningsen ranch house, where Craig’s family resided for almost two decades. Craig and Poco are both about 19 years old in this photo.

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# Native American Words of Wisdom

By Paul Crane Tohlakai

With the passage of time, some things that are forgotten become legends that become myths, it is said. For Indigenous horse cultures like the Navajo, myths become mysteries that play a vital role in mystical world viewed with awe.

As such, all creation has a purpose in the circle of life, such as the horse. The Navajo's creation story tells of the great Sun being carried across the sky on a horse by a warrior. The horse being created from the earth elements by holy beings belongs to the sun. The day April 8th, 2024 was a reminder of the relationship between Sun, Moon, Earth. A solar eclipse to my people – the Diné or Navajos – is a renewal, a cycle repeated since time immemorial. For the duration of the eclipse, the Sun will for a short period of time be given time to undergo a rebirth with the warrior on the horse. Likewise, we the human entity observe the time to honor ourselves and all creation for we are all interwoven in sustaining the Circle of life.

In my possession is a generations-old buckskin pouch with a horse fetish carved from a stone that has been passed on to me. It is reminder of the horse's origin, purpose, and future as a sacred being with spirit to roam freely as intended. It would be beautiful to see the horse and other four-legged, winged, plants and all life be allowed to live in the natural world as intended. The problem is that humans don't try to understand real life's eco-system but instead impose man-made laws and policies based on land control. Little do we realize that we invade, exploit, overconsume and desecrate the environment. We could learn from nature how to be true caretakers of life without hidden agendas.

Our myth of a beautiful creation, the horse will ever be our medicine, healer and carry our spirit to other realms of the spirit. The horse carries the deceased to the spirit world in horse cultures.

There is much more to say about the horse's plight and history that parallels the struggle of Native Americans and wildlife on Turtle Island. Their imperiled future as with the bison is a risk too great to ignore under the guise of agencies adamant in determining the future without involvement of indigenous people and original species as well. Their voice and cries are not heard as sentient beings. The universal law of karma may assume its position in time lest we find an amiable solution for the wild free-roaming horses.

As the Sun renews itself, I will take my Horse medicine pouch to the west and make offering and send my voice this day for the Horse Nation.

"It does not take many words to speak the truth" – Chief Joseph. ■

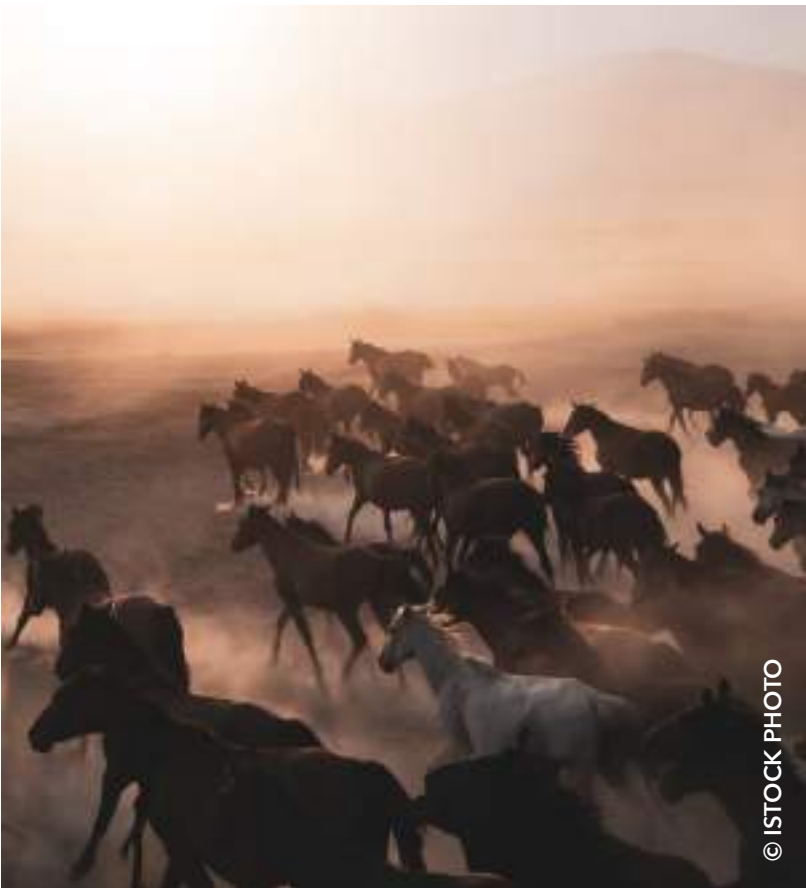
We are thrilled to introduce our readers to Paul Crane Tohlakai, a new member of ISPMB's Council Circle.

He will be writing for our magazine in each issue bringing the Native American perspective. Paul is a full-blooded Diné (Navajo) from Pinon, Arizona. Among his many accomplishments, Paul is an Indigenous spokesperson for saving North American bison, mustangs, and sacred sites. His major causes include cultural preservation, protection of the environment and redemptive movements. He is an advisor to ISPMB about the Native perspective.



## The Navajo War God's Horse Song

I am the Turquoise Woman's son  
On top of Belted Mountain,  
Beautiful horse – slim like a weasel.  
My horse's hooves are striped agate,  
His fetlock is a fine eagle plume,  
His legs are quick lightning  
My horse's body is like an eagle plume  
His legs are like quick lightning.  
My horse's body is like an eagle-plumed arrow,  
My horse has a tail like a trailing black cloud  
I put beautiful robes on my horse's back  
The little holy wind blows through his mane  
His mane is made of short rainbows  
My horse's eyes are made of morning star  
My horse's head is made of mixed waters  
My horse's teeth are made of white shell  
The long rainbow is in his mouth for a war bridle,  
And with it, I guide him.  
When my horse neighs, different-colored horses follow.  
I am wealthy because of him  
Before me is peace  
Behind me is peace  
Below me is peace  
Above me is peace  
Peace is all around me  
There is peaceful voice when he neighs  
I am everlasting and peaceful  
I stand for my horse







## New Public Lands Conservation Rule

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) posted its proposed new Public Lands Conservation Rule on April 2, 2023 for comments to the public. The new rule proposed adding “conservation” as a use in the realm of multiple uses of the public lands. Comments were accepted up to June 20, 2023—and the BLM received 200,000 of them. The rule was finalized in April 2024.

We commend the BLM for its current attempt in this rule to prioritize the health and resilience of ecosystems across the entirety of our public lands by protecting intact landscapes, restoring degraded habitat, and making wise management decisions based on science and data.

This rule does codify the Federal Land Management Act of 1976 that conservation is a land use equal to extractive uses of public lands which are noted in this law.

ISPMB gave comments as to how this rule might relate to wild horses and burros and how it might adversely affect them. At this writing, we have not completely read through the more than 400 pages of the final rule which will be published in the federal register and at which time it becomes official.

Time will tell as conservation leases are created. We will note if overgrazing by livestock permittees will continue in the degradation of public lands and possibly facilitated through these conservation leases.

We do know that since the inception of the 1971 Act, the BLM has been the most underfunded agency with the most amount of land to manage. This was one of our main concerns in the new rule which would shift a lot of management that they should and must do to outside leases.

According to a report from Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), in 2022 BLM had only 4.18 employees for every 100,000 acres of land to manage, while the National Parks had 24.57 employees for every 100,000 acres of lands. PEER goes on to say that BLM lands are managed for far more complex uses, including grazing, mining, oil and gas drilling, and recreation use, than are most Park Service lands. They further state that BLM is getting thinner, with only 10,242 employees in 2022 compared to 10,356 in 2015.

PEER goes on to say that at the end of 2023, 50 percent of the lands assessed (56,751,890 million acres) do not meet BLM’s own land health standards and that over 36 million acres of the 155 million acres of rangeland have yet to be assessed. PEER states, “These findings are just one indication that BLM lacks the staff and resources to assess the land health of 100 million additional acres and manage a new nationwide conservation and mitigation leasing program meaningfully.”

The 200,000 comments received on the rule led to important improvements in the final rule, according to the BLM.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public lands located primarily in 12 western states. ■

## *Your support is critical*

to the future of all wild horses and burros in our country. Please help us in our fight to bring the truth forward that there is no overpopulation of wild horses and transform how these animals are managed on public lands.

**We are so grateful for your support.**



### We Protect Your Privacy

We do not sell or trade your name to anyone. This has been ISPMB’s practice since our inception.





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Heber bachelors in tall grass enjoy each other's company in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest.

# Update on the Heber Herd

We are happy to announce that the horses continue to live peacefully in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest going on nigh 20 years. While we await the draft record of decision, we expect no real action until late this year or early next year. Keep on calling Secretary Vilsack asking that he make this herd a study herd! Call 202-720-3631. For more information, please go to our website at [www.ispmb.org](http://www.ispmb.org). This herd, if studied, could transform how wild horses are managed in our country. Your continued help is so appreciated. ■



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## Take ACTION Save the Heber Herd

PLEASE CALL , E-MAIL, OR WRITE TO  
SECRETARY VILSACK

202-720-3631

EMAIL: [SEC.AG@USDA.GOV](mailto:SEC.AG@USDA.GOV)

Address your letter to:

The Honorable Secretary Tom Vilsack  
1400 Independence Ave. S.W. Ste 200A  
Washington, D.C. 20250 or call 202-720-3631

1. We are asking that you declare the Heber herd in northern Arizona in the Apache-Sitgreaves Forest a "study" herd with your authority in Section 10 of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act.
2. The National Academy of Sciences recommended a 7 to 10-year study in 1980-1982 to understand the behaviors of these wild horses and burros.
3. Your Agency, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management, decided not to do this study and stated the following in 1984: "The most pressing question concerning future research for the Agencies is whether the benefits of increased knowledge and efficiency will justify the costs."
4. The Heber herd has cost the Forest Service very little over the past 18 years and the herd remains stable and intact. This herd is doing a great job at reseeding the forest after the big fire in 2002.
  - There were 300-400 wild horses in 2005; and in 2021, there were only 414 horses, which is less than a 3% growth.
  - According to your Agencies' miscalculated data of a 20% annual growth that they use, there now should be 4,800 wild horses in the forest.
5. The yearly costs of removing wild horses from their rightful land, separating them from their families, and storing them in privately-owned pastures have cost taxpayers \$77 million dollars annually. Certainly, the study that should have been done in 1982 and



BUCKSKIN FAMILY OF HEBER  
WILD HORSES IN THE FOREST

© BETTY NIXON

onward would have saved taxpayers millions and millions of dollars and would have saved the herds.

6. Finally, is this not the administration that believes in science guiding your decisions? Then this study will TRANSFORM how wild horses should be managed.

In writing or calling, you are taking action that might just save these magnificent forest horses. And remember, there is power in numbers.

### PLEASE WRITE TO YOUR CONGRESSPEOPLE

1. Ask that Congress appropriate funding to study the Heber herd residing in the Apache-Sitgreaves Forest in northern Arizona.
2. State that this study must be done, not by the FS or the BLM, but by independent scientists who are well-versed in wild horse ecology and behaviors of equids from around the world.
3. Ask that there is a moratorium on removals to allow the band structures within the herds to stabilize once again.
4. Demand that the Agencies stop using birth control of any kind, which permanently sterilizes horses within three consecutive years of use.
5. Repeat points 2-6 in the above-mentioned letter to Secretary Vilsack. ■



# McCullough Peaks Wild Horses of Cody, Wyoming Shattered

## *Another Wild Horse Herd Rounded Up after Receiving Birth Control Since 2011*

The McCullough Peaks wild horses and all that they stood for—being one of the premiere herds receiving birth control, thus limiting their growth and being allowed to live peacefully without ever being rounded up—was shattered this year.

This is just another of many herds which show that it is a fallacy accepted by many of the horse groups that wild horses receiving birth control will never be rounded up and can live their lives out peacefully on public lands.

Not only is the above a fallacy but ISPMB's experience with birth control of its other two herds showed permanent infertility in as short as four years of consecutive use. A mare that was permanently infertile stole foals of first-time mothers five different times – all of whom would have died due to no milk or the lack of colostrum without having these foals returned to their birth mothers.

The reports of the McCullough Peaks horses as narrated by Carol Walker, Wild Hoofbeats, claimed that the BLM removed foals from their mothers as young as 4 months, 5 months, and yearling. They left these youngsters in a corral all alone during the night. In the morning, the yearling was found dead from a head injury. This is Rule No. 1 not to break, because the yearling tried to get to the herd and no doubt injured herself by hitting the fence. Wild horses do not see gates and all



gates must be protected with visual colors of tape or cloth over them so that they can see the gate and not run through it. This fact was learned early in the adoption program. Here we are—almost 40 years of adopting wild horses and having the same lethal problems. Bottom line, youngsters should never be left alone as it is a very frightening situation.

BLM has always touted this herd area as a success story. In fact, some of the McCullough Peaks horses have gone to the Little Book Cliffs horses in Colorado after their genetic diversity waned from using birth control on those horses. Sadly, the reason then for the transfer years ago was to put pinto colors into the herd because they are more adoptable. Early on the Little Book Cliffs herd was purely Spanish.

ISPMB does not believe that wild horse cultures should be mixed unless absolutely necessary for genetic diversity. Each culture operates as a separate community with learned behaviors and attitudes that just might not be accepted by another culture of horses.

The public was excluded from observing the removals of the McCullough Peaks horses. There were at least six dead horses and five horses missing. This removal was based on what the appropriate management level should be, according to the BLM. ISPMB has concerns with this determination when considered together with The 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, an important provision of which requires removing only those animals that may be causing damage to the habitat. There were no monitoring studies. ■



**WHEN YOU DONATE TO ISPMB, YOU WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR WILD HORSES AND BURROS. ISPMB IS MAKING THAT DIFFERENCE!**

**OUR GOAL THIS ISSUE IS TO RAISE \$50,000. WILL YOU HELP PLEASE AND GIVE FROM YOUR HEART?**



# Great News: The Teddy Roosevelt National Park Horses will be Allowed to Stay

We were ecstatic to hear the news that the Theodore Roosevelt National Park horses are going to be saved from elimination by the National Park Service (NPS). These horses have received the birth control drug, GonaCon, given by the NPS, thus causing a major concern that horses may become infertile and thus eliminated over time. Yet, these are first steps—and we are appreciative to the NPS and all those who were instrumental in getting the NPS to change their position. We hope that federal legislation will eventually be passed to give permanent protection to these horses.

You must understand that the horses are not protected under the 1971 Act because they are not on public lands, defined by the Act as only Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service lands. However, they recently received “a permanent stay” through the hard work of activist Christine Kman, president and co-founder of Chasing Horses Wild Horse Advocates, and the North Dakota legislative delegation.

Chris Kman shared a press release from U.S. Senator John Hoeven from North Dakota who worked tirelessly with advocates to stop the National Park Service from removing these horses permanently.

On April 25, 2024, Senator Hoeven announced that he had secured a commitment from the National Park Service (NPS) to maintain the wild horses at Theodore Roosevelt National Park (TRNP). The NPS will immediately terminate its proposed removal of horses at TRNP under the environmental assessment (EA) process initiated in 2022, and as a result, the existing management plan for the wild horses will remain in place to manage for a healthy herd.

Senator Hoeven said, “These wild horses are emblematic of President Theodore Roosevelt’s time in North Dakota, a formative experience that shaped his presidency and lasting legacy. Given the broad public support for maintaining the wild horses at TRNP, as well as the measure we passed through Congress, this is the right call by NPS. We appreciate Director Sams, Regional Director Frost and Superintendent Richman for working with us on this priority and being responsive to the input we and the public provided.”

Also introduced to the park will be a preservation plan for Grizzly bears. Between three and seven bears will be released into the park each year which could last up to a decade. The plan calls for building back a population of about 200 bears within six to 10 decades.



**Xander’s band out in the wild at the Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota.**

© CHRIS & GARY KMAN

## About the Teddy Roosevelt National Park Horses

The 2022 Environmental Assessment (EA) calling for the eventual end of wild horses on TRNP received tremendous backlash from advocates and now will be disregarded, going back to a pre-existing plan to manage for a “healthy herd.”

The horses had a strong Congressional delegation supporting them including Governor Doug Burgum, the United Tribes of North Dakota, the state legislators, Senator Hoeven, and the State Historic Preservation Office. It seems the entire state of North Dakota wants these wild horses preserved so future generations can come and visit and enjoy these magnificent horses.

The horses are direct descendants of those ridden by the Sioux chiefs in the 1876 Battle of Little Bighorn. They have a strong history on these park lands.

Meanwhile, the advocates still have more work to do. The next step in protecting the horses will be working to achieve federal protection for them.

For a detailed explanation of the last 2-year history of the park horses and more information, go to [www.chwha.org](http://www.chwha.org) or contact Chris Kman. ■



© CHRIS & GARY KMAN

**A rainbow shines over Half Moon Bay’s band in the Theodore Roosevelt National Park.**





## Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range - Where Birth Control Began – May Be Cut in Half

Another herd that was supposedly to never be removed because of the active use of birth control now may be cut in half from 200 to 80 horses.

The Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range in northwest Colorado is a range identified by the BLM as the third wild horse range and dedicated to Wild Horse Annie. This range is 36,000 acres which would allow 180 acres per animal.

Ranges, usually in areas where it snows, take only 30 acres per horse year-round grazing. The horses should never be removed unless they are causing damage to their habitat.

We understand the very top part of the range where some wild horses range have never received birth control because the volunteers cannot get to these horses to dart them. We hope the BLM will allow these horses at the top of the range to remain as they would literally be untouched.

An environmental assessment is in progress. The plan calls for an initial gather using helicopters and assisted roping, follow-up gathers over a 10-year period, and application of fertility control methods that may include vaccines and flexible intrauterine devices (IUDs). ■

YOUR GILA HERD KEEPS GIVING ISPMB EXTREMELY IMPORTANT DATA.  
YOUR DONATION WILL HELP KEEP THIS HERD IN CONSERVATION AND  
KEEP THE INFORMATION FLOWING. HELP US SUSTAIN THEM!

## A Win for Nevada Horses Came in March *Although Too Late to Save 2,000 Horses*

U. S. District Court Judge Miranda Du of Reno ordered the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to complete a formal Herd Management Area Plan (HMAP) for the Pancake Complex in eastern Nevada within one year. She also ordered the agency to reopen an environmental assessment to include the impacts of removal on wildfire risks.

As quoted by the Associated Press, Judge Du said, “The duty to prepare HMAP arose as soon as the BLM created the HMAs. That duty arose when BLM promulgated the regulation 39 years ago in 1986. BLM’s decade-long delays in developing and approving HMAPs have therefore been ‘nothing short of egregious’ and clearly violate the rule of reason.”

Another U.S. judge in Reno refused to grant an injunction last summer sought by the Nevada advocates to halt the roundup that was underway when dozens of horses died in that roundup. Over 2,000 wild horses were removed from their homes. ■



## A Big Win for Wild Horses in Nevada and Utah this Year

According to Friends of Animals, U.S. District Court Judge Randolph Moss ruled that the Bureau of Land Management cannot continue to conduct “maintenance” wild horse roundups under its 10-year plans after the agency achieves so-called appropriate management levels—the number of wild horses that the agency determines can exist in balance with other public rangeland species, resources and uses in the area.

This victory impacts Utah’s Muddy Creek and Onaqui Mountains and the Pine Nut Mountains and Eagle Complex in Nevada. This is a big win for wild horses because for the first time since 1992 BLM must follow the law. ■







## Przewalski Horses Return to Kazakhstan this Summer

The Czech Air Force will transport eight Przewalski horses to Kazakhstan on June 3. Two planes will be involved, one leaving from Berlin, Germany and the other from Prague, Czech Republic. The horses will be accommodated in the Altyn Dala state nature reserve in the Kostanai Region.

Over the next five years, there is a planned transport of at least 40 Przewalski horses. These endangered species are returning to the wild where they once inhabited, made possible by successful breeding programs in European zoos. The horses will be returned to the Kazakh steppes, similar to the reintroduction of these horses to Mongolia, where several hundred of them now roam freely.

The Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK) has been working for a long time for the preservation of the steppe landscape. The Altyn Dala reserve was established in 2012 consisting of 489,766 hectares or approximately 1.2 million acres. It is the largest Kazakh non-governmental organization in biodiversity conservation and environmental education.

Kazakhstan is bordered by Russia to the north and the Caspian Sea to the southwest and gained its independence from the former Soviet Union on Dec. 16, 1991. ■

## Australia's Brumbies Killed in Aerial Shooting in New South Wales

As of March 27, 2024, the Brumbies of Kosciuszko Nation Park (KNP) lost protection and can be shot from the air, according to the New South Wales and the Senate inquiry and final hearing on the wild horses' fate.

Inquiry chair Animal Justice Party MLC Emma Hurst made a motion to stop the killing the week before but the motion lost in Parliament, paving the way for aerial killings of these horses.

In preparation for the killing of the horses, the government closed the southern portion of the park south of Alpine Way in early March.

According to Environmental Minister Penny Sharpe, an estimated 17,432 horses will be reduced to 3,000 by 2027. Sharpe said culling operations were necessary to protect Australia's alpine environment. There are about 32 species of both plants and animals not found anywhere else on earth.

Damage to the park has been blamed on the horses. Sharpe stated that 4,152 horses have been removed from the park since November 2021 (1,336 from aerial shooting, 129 from ground shooting, 916 for rehoming, 540 for transport to Knackeries, 109 from shooting in yards, 70 from tranquillization in yards, 37 from euthanasia and 15 dying indirectly for different reasons).

Another 534 wild horses were shot from the air, following the publication of the previously reported numbers, according to media reports.

A crowdfunded high-tech independent survey in northern KNP will come under spotlight showing that counts of wild horses are 90 percent lower than NSW's figures. The organizer of the private count is Rocky Harvey. The count was done from a fixed-wing aircraft.

According to Harvey, "If this overestimation is applied to the total NPWS population estimate of 17,432, it is likely there are already less than 1,200 horses remaining in the entire park, which is far below the legislated 3,000 horses."

For more information, visit this website in Australia: <https://australianbrumbyalliance.org.au/>

Unlike America's wild horses, who evolved on the North American continent, the Brumbies were introduced to the Australian landscape in 1788 with the first English fleet.

The term Brumby is thought to have originated from horses left behind by Sargent James Brumby in 1806. ■



### DO A FACEBOOK FUNDRAISER FOR ISPMB

A great opportunity to increase giving to International Society for the Protection of Mustang and Burros is with a Facebook Fundraiser.

Learn more at <https://www.facebook.com/fund/ISPMB>



# Spirit of the ANCIENTS

## SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM



ISPMB manages an extremely rare Spanish herd of wild horses.  
Your sponsorship will help us keep them running free!

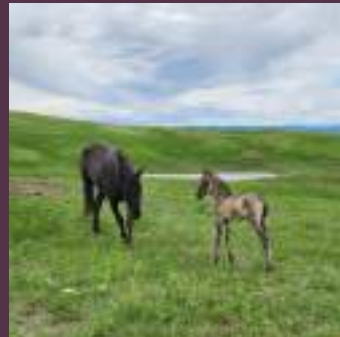
Become a part of the sponsorship program with the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros (ISPMB), the oldest wild horse and burro organization in the United States.  
Your sponsorship helps with the care of our Gila herd and supports ISPMB's conservation goals.

### Sponsor a wild horse \$150/year



Sponsor a harem stallion, mare, foal, bachelor or stallion and receive a certificate with a photo of your horse and the history of the gila Herd.

### Sponsor a Mare and Foal \$500/year



Sponsor this beautiful mare and her foal showing their close bond and follow them as the foal grows. Receive a certificate with their photo. This makes a wonderful gift that someone you love is sure to cherish.

### Sponsor a Wild Horse Band \$1,000/year



Receive a certificate featuring a unique band from the Gila Herd. You'll also receive an 8x10" colored photo along with the herd's history.

### Sponsor a Herd \$5,000/year



Receive a certificate, an 8x10" colored photo and a three-day vacation viewing, photographing and interacting with the herds. Your name will be inscribed on our donor wall as a founding member of our International Wild Horse and Burro Heritage Center.

Join our Spirit of the Ancients sponsorship program. To donate:

VISIT OUR SPONSORSHIP PAGE:  
<https://ispmb.org/sponsor-a-horse/>

MAIL DONATION TO:  
International Society for the Protection  
of Mustangs and Burros  
P.O. Box 435, Rapid City, SD 57709-0435

## Safeguarding their Future through our Members' Lasting Memories in our Garden of Hope

Justyne Van Dyke



**We remember  
our members  
who have passed.**

### *Justyne Van Dyke*

Justyne Van Dyke was born in 1928 and was an avid supporter of ISPMB since our inception and until her death in 2022. We are so grateful for her many contributions to ISPMB over all these years and we are so pleased to know that she has left ISPMB a generous bequest.

Justyne loved animals – especially cats. Her generous financial support for animal charities continued throughout her life. She often quietly paid for neutering and spaying of animals whose owners had difficulty affording that care. In addition, she regularly purchased extra pet food to donate to feral cat colonies.

ISPMB is fortunate that we were among her favorite charities. She will be sorely missed but always remembered. Her name will be inscribed in our donor wall at our CENTER's Interpretive Building along with many of our other donors who have remembered ISPMB in their wills.

*Anita Berry*  
*Melvin Boxman*  
*Kathleen Bussa*  
*Eugene Fiktus*  
*James "Jim" Fouts*  
*Mary Elizabeth Garvey*  
*Anthony "Tony" LeMaitre,*  
*volunteer for ISPMB*  
*Ellen Peterson*

A gift to the wild horses and burros in your will or trust will help ensure the safeguarding of their future. Your name will be inscribed on our donor wall at the "Garden of Hope" at our Heritage CENTER.

We are extremely grateful to all of our members who have notified us of their intent to remember our wild horses and burros. This Lasting Legacy will be forever remembered as visitors tour our up-and-coming CENTER.

### **GIFT AN ACRE OF LAND \$2,500**

Giftgiving an Acre of Land assures that our wild horses will be running free and assures your name will be inscribed on our donor wall as a founding member of the International Wild Horse and Burro Heritage CENTER.



# *Your Generosity Helps the Horses!*

WE CAN PUT ANY SIZE DONATION TO WORK:

*\$5 ..... Carrots for one horse*

*\$10 ..... Small bale of hay for one horse*

*\$20 ..... Senior feed for our elders*

*\$90 ..... Large bale of hay\**

*\$150 ..... Sponsor a horse for a year*

*\$500 ..... Sponsor a mare and foal for a year*

*\$1,000 ..... Sponsor a band for a year*

*\$5,000 .... Sponsor a herd for a year*

*\$50,000 ... Feed Gila herd for a year\*\**

*\*Feeds an average horse for approximately a month*

*\*\*Become a lifetime member of ISPMB*

