



Whickers, Whinnies, Nickers and Neighs

Vol. 1 Issue 4

The Fresh Start Horse Rescue News

Dec. 2006

In Memoriam



Stormy, now called "the 1st"

1984 - Dec, 2005

Protector, Teacher, Trusted friend

A Dream Deferred

Like many horse-crazy kids, I had to wait until adulthood to realize the Dream. Consequently most of my idealized, romantic hopes about having a horse were dashed by reality.

It wasn't that care and expense made for a rude awakening. I'd been around horses as much as I could finagle all throughout my life—if I could avoid bathing after an afternoon of mucking stalls I would, to stay pleasingly perfumed as long as possible. And expense! That was the Excuse of Cruel Parents for Years of Heartless Deprivation: in suburban Connecticut it was an awfully good one. After we moved to Salt Lake City I went years without seeing a horse.

Finally, I graduated. My life and my money my own, I moved to Durango. I seized my chance and bought my first horse.

The problem with my dream turned out to be that I'd grown up. I was busy. Logistics were terrible. My vision had dimmed.

I rented a room in town, worked full-time and went to school. Stormy was a three-year-old, green-broke Navajo pony. I kept her in a huge field far from town. No nice stable graced this

picture, no paddock adorned my backyard. No pricked ears fixated on my bedroom window. There were no rides over the prairie into the sunset. Half the time when I could make it out to where she was I couldn't catch her! I felt like an idiot most of the time I was around her.

I moved her into town, to a stall at the fairgrounds. That daily responsibility helped me through some bad times. I rode her—around the track and up on the mesa. But not enough.

When the hospital closed I was out of a job. I moved into a canyon, lived as a typical Native American wanna-be. Stormy packed groceries to camp. She traveled through two decades and several lives with me. I never imagined she'd become my daughter's first horse. But she did, complete with pricked ears in the window and colorful rides across the landscape.

I could've ridden her every day. Truth is, I didn't. Stormy hung out in the forty, mostly, with her donkey pal, Tulip. The day I found her gone, just four hours after I'd left her contentedly munching breakfast, Tulip spied me sitting there beside her. She ambled over beside us, and let me hug her and cry.

Tulip is still here, a year later, queen of the ranch. We have another Stormy, the same flea-bitten gray, but with a difference: he's pure Arab, the prince of my childhood romances. I don't want to repeat the mistakes I made with the first Stormy. I hope to make the most of the time I am blessed with him.

Do you have a first horse story or tribute you'd like to share? If you can tell it in 500 words or less I would love to post it. You may e-mail it as a .doc attachment or in the body of the message, with "first horse story" in the subject line, to freshstart@happyryan.com. Or send it postal mail to Fresh Start at 17390 CR 23, Dolores, CO 81323. Include picture if desired. I am not a "format Nazi," crayon on Big Chief tablet is

fine. I reserve the right to edit for spelling and punctuation—and grammar only if I have to.



King of the Mountain

The sun was shining on the Dolores River, warming the secluded canyon off the dirt road. Paula's car was parked there, pointed into the canyon's gullet. There was no sign of her. Or him. Well, they were probably together, I reasoned.

We hadn't taken two steps when the brand inspector, Joel Stevenson, rolled in to join us. Together we started up the canyon, following the river. I fell behind, pacing my five-year-old son. We couldn't see far for all the willows.

And then I heard Stevenson say: "There he is."

Eagerly, but cautiously, we bounded up the slight hill in front of us, crested it.

There he was indeed.

The river had curved, and he stood on the other side of it, black and magnificent with a white blaze on his face, watching us with curiosity. He was fuzzy and not very big, cob-sized maybe. He glowed with health. His feathered feet were perfect from climbing about on the rocks. Did I bring a camera? No, idiot! My gaze swept over the river, to my left, and there was Paula, sitting where she had been for at least an hour, and for hours and patient hours before that.

She calls him Norman, and he has been up and down the canyon, on and off the mesa, for months.

Norman is crafty. He has no fear of capture, because of course he can walk away from any fool with a rope. He eats from Paula's hand with impunity. She cultivates a relationship with him, but has no way to snare him; if she moves he sidles away. But she is concerned for him. Bears share this area with Norman, bears that might be hungry. She has seen bear scat on top of Norman's. And what about vehicles in the dark?

Paula calls the deputy. The deputy calls the brand inspector. ("The nurse calls the lady with the alligator purse . . .") We've been asked to see if we can help catch this stray. Daniel is on his way to meet us with the trailer. We're all under the naïve impression that if we catch Norman, we will shelter him from these dangers until his owner can be found. However, this is not to be.

A strange twist

Stevenson informs us that the procedure for unidentified stray horses is not to take them home, or to a rescue, but rather to the Montezuma County Livestock Auction, otherwise known as the sale barn. Stevenson inspects the animal for a brand, and if he knows who the owner is he contacts him. Otherwise an ad is put out, and after a given period of time, if the horse is unclaimed, it goes to public auction. Why?

Market value, Stevenson explains. When the horse goes to auction, the public determines its value. If the horse sells at auction for \$700, then the horse is worth \$700, no more, even if the owner shows up later and it turns out to be a registered quarter horse he paid \$5000 for.

Norman regards my daughter with interest. She is carrying a black rubber bucket with grain in it. He crosses the river to investigate, and she lays the bucket down and backs away. Norman approaches the bucket.

Stevenson has cattle to inspect. He has to leave, but wishes us luck.

We continue the slow process Paula began: that of getting close enough to Norman to slip a rope around his neck. A bite of grain here, a mouthful of hay there, Norman toys with us. Time passes. The sun sweeps overhead, and all too soon the swift darkness drapes its frigid cloak over the canyon. Our efforts are doomed and we yield at last.

As we turn to go, we find ourselves suddenly looking at Norman through different eyes. He stands proudly, strong and healthy, king of his paradise, and we wonder . . . mightn't he be better off, then, taking his chances with the bears?

Rescue News

Winter certainly has hit hard! The ice was so thick on Tulip's water trough one morning I had to use the digging bar to break it. She greeted me with icicles in her ears.

Work has progressed on our indoor stalls, but we have a long way to go yet.

Looking for horse-lovers to join our board

We particularly need an accountant to help with filing for 501(c)(3), and someone with contacts to help set up a placement program to match up folks who want a horse with other folks who have one they don't want/can't keep. Interested individuals please call Daniel Ryan at 970-394-4120.

Beat the winter blahs, sponsor a horse!

For a small monthly fee, you can partner up with a horse of your choosing for as long as you like if the horse is unadoptable, and if up for adoption, until the horse is adopted. For far less than the cost of buying a horse property and rearranging your life, you will help support/rescue a horse and have as much of a hands-on relationship with it as you want.

Volunteers, Donors, Thank you!

Through donating time, feed, finances and moral support during Oct/Nov/Dec, you have helped keep us alive until 2007!

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Carrie Peterson</i> | <i>Paula Lawrence</i> |
| <i>Bill Ivy</i> | <i>Kathy Kolas</i> |
| <i>Patricia Anderson</i> | <i>Gerald Wallace</i> |
| <i>Laurie Ryan</i> | <i>Richard Selah</i> |
| | <i>Frederick Schaak</i> |

Spills

In the Oct. 06 issue I misspelled the name of Jennifer Barry, one of our volunteers. We appreciate her and I apologize for the error.

Order Form

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

T-shirt @ \$20 ea.....\$ _____

Size _____ Qty _____ Color _____

CD @ \$15 ea.....\$ _____

Tape @ \$10 ea.....\$ _____

Total order.....\$ _____

Make check payable to Fresh Start Horse Rescue, 17390 CR 23, Dolores CO 81323. Allow up to six weeks for delivery.

Word Search

Q N B K C O L T E F M T P T
 T B I S F O R E L O C K K O
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 A Q N R C K T F A T O Z R H
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Find 17 parts of the horse -answers next month

Last month's answers - 17 & 2 colors

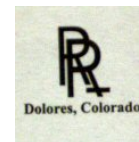
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|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Andalusian | A N D A L U S I A N M T Q T |
| Appaloosa | R R I S S O H V P A N N U H |
| Arabian, Cob | G U A B H A E C P I A A A O |
| Fell Pony | A Q Y B C K T F A S I Z R R |
| Friesian, Hackney | G O T N I P L P L E R I T O |
| Hanoverian | N C O B L A A C O I E P E U |
| Lippizan | A M P S A R N L O R V P R G |
| Morgan, Vanner | T O H B E I D H S F O I H H |
| Mustang, Paint | S R O N I M O L A P N L O B |
| Quarter Horse | U G N Q U Y E N K C A H R R |
| Shagya, Shetland | M A V N N Z A Y G A H S S E |
| Thoroughbred | V N F E L L P O N Y R Z E D |

Palomino, Pinto Silly games © 2006 by Amanda Ryan

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back



breast

Prices Reduced! We have T-shirts available for a \$20 donation. Shirts are natural with black or chocolate printing. Sizes S, M, L



We also have Celtic music CDs and tapes. Beltaine was a local Durango, CO band for 10 years.
 CD: \$15
 Tape: \$10

Beltaine, Any Port in a Storm

These items and more are also available in **Simpler Times** in the Durango Mall or order from our Web

site, www.happyryan.com/freshstartT, with PayPal.

Horse of the Month:



Talon, an auction rescue, on Calico Trail. Unique of a breed, the Awesome Mountain Horse. He's kid gentle and reliable uphill, downhill, upside-down and in an emergency. Friendly, full of personality. We'll cry when he gets adopted!

We're at capacity. In order to save more horses, we **MUST** adopt some out!

FRESH START HORSE RESCUE
17390 CR 23
DOLORES, CO 81323

Fresh Start Horse Rescue incorporated as a Colorado nonprofit on September 19, 2006. We are located on Ryan Ranch & Rescue, 40 acres of pasture and piñon-juniper forest near Dolores, CO. We're filing to become a 501(c)(3). **Our mission** is to provide a fresh start for horses (all breeds) that are abused, neglected, unwanted or potentially slaughter-bound, by rescue, care/rehab, and placement in loving homes where they will have a future; or, if unadoptable, by providing them with a permanent home ourselves. FSHR will not accept any horse on the premises without a prior brand inspection.

Schedule a time to come see Talon or any others available for adoption or sponsorship by calling Daniel Ryan at 970-394-4120 or 970-882-7522. For more information about Fresh Start, our horses, adoption and sponsorship, visit our Web site, www.happyryan.com/freshstart, or contact us directly. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of our equine friends.

