

WILD HORSE ADVENTURE PROGRAM

Wild Horse Preservation League

1. WESTERN NEVADA

Wild Horse Photographic Tours
with Mark Terrell, Dayton 775-230-1992

Comments from Peggy McKinley of 'Meeting America's Mustangs' in Texas after a recent tour with Mark Terrell: *"We recently went on a tour with Mark and it was an experience that I will never forget. The beauty of the Mustangs was breathtaking and so see them safe and in their natural habitat was the way God intended it to be. Mark was a gracious host and his photos speak for themselves. It was amazing and we can't wait to go again. You asked about our operation and what we are doing is producing a 13 week TV series called "Meeting America's Mustangs".*

We will feature each week a story about the American Mustang and how the mustang can be a trusted and valuable companion for any family. We hope to educate the public on the care and the history of the Mustang. We also want to educate the public on what is happening to the American Mustang, because most people are unaware of the dangers and that they could disappear forever. My husband Bill and I have put this together to help bring light to the Mustangs and help educate the public.

Our basic idea was to get "America to fall in love with the Mustangs" If we could do that then the Mustangs would have a brighter future and people would realize the value that they bring into our lives. We are also going to have a live tour with our two trained Mustangs, Freedom and Liberty. They are going to tour the country and since Ford is our sponsor, they Freedom and Liberty will be at a scheduled Ford dealer though out the country and the public will have a chance to meet Freedom and Liberty in person so people can experience the beauty and love of these great animals.

My husband and I are so excited about this project, not only because we believe so strongly in saving the American Mustang, but this show will help save so many of the Mustangs and help get them adopted and help all the people that will be involved in this. We have met so many wonderful people and horses already and our journey has just begun.

Bonnie Matton, President
Wild Horse Preservation League
Dayton 775-220-6806

Letter received to WHPL in April 2011 from Barbara Crossland, Eduquest program development, Reno: *"As one of our educational travel offerings, EduQuest runs a popular program about the wild horses of Nevada-"America's Living Legends." We have been able to offer participants the opportunity to see the horses in their natural habitat with the help of the Wild Horse Preservation League. With expert guides to lead our groups we've ventured into the desert areas of northern Nevada and enjoyed the opportunity to observe bands of these fascinating animals as they roamed free.*

The volunteers of the Preservation League have been knowledgeable about the horses' behavior and adaptation to their environment and ability to survive in their natural state. In addition they have explained the issues related to the wild horses involving the BLM, the ranchers and environmentalists.

We have found that all aspects of the story of the wild horses is of great interest to people. Traveling into areas to view the horses is the highlight of the program, offering the same excitement and personal experience enjoyed in any trek to view animals in their natural setting. It seems to be an activity that could add significantly to tourism in northern Nevada.

Letter received from Carla Passero, San Francisco, CA: *"Bonnie, thank you so much for taking me, my son, and my Dad around to see the wild horses. I believe that our donation to your organization was a wonderful way to honor my Mother's memory. She loved horses and was particularly interested in wild horses. I appreciate the time you spent with us and all that you are doing to help the horses."*

Email received from independent film maker, Jan Liverance: *For those who want to see the horses in the wild as I do, the dilemma is how can one can view these beautiful creatures without disturbing their habitat, or altering their healthy aversion to people. If you're looking for the wild horse viewing version of 'leave no trace', you will be in good hands with Bonnie Matton of Wild Horse Preservation League, and the tour people who participate in the League's Wild Horse Adventure Program.*

Bonnie provides access yet understands safety and health of the horses trumps all. She takes the time to acquaint you with best practices, before you reach a wild horse viewing site, so you are prepared to be respectful upon arrival. For Bonnie, responsibility to the well-being of the wild horses comes first; her combination of integrity, friendliness and local knowledge is a true gift to visitors to the Virginia Range of Nevada."

Terry Kauffman
Rancho Red Rock
Reno 775-969-3315

Terry: *"The weather's been so bad this year with all the winds and late snow, we haven't taken any long trail rides out yet. But, last spring and fall, we had many rides up in the mountains where we were able to see them. If we go slowly on horseback, stopping and starting, we can get quite close to them for our guests to take their pictures. They love to see them, especially the babies."*

Tina Brodrick
Sonny Boys Tours
Reno 775-200-5205

Tina: *"Bonnie – Thanks for the kudos in your RGJ article about wild horses and eco-tourism. Things are going pretty well. The brochure and my web site are bringing people here for tours. Last week I had a woman and her son and daughter-in-law come from Sacramento just to see the horses! It's absolutely wonderful to see their faces and how happy they are after seeing the mustangs. I love my job!"*

Tom, Virginia & Truckee Railroad
Virginia City 775-847-0380

Tom: *"Seeing the wild horses from the train is just wonderful for the passengers. Just this morning, they were up by the shop so the conductor was able to stop several times for the passengers to really see and take pictures of them. There was about 12-14 in the band. Yesterday, as we were going through American Flats, the big white stallion (who we're fortunate to see often), came right up to the train, bringing his family with him. They actually seem to like to come up and greet us! Later, as we started back down the hill to Carson City, they actually started galloping right along side the train, keeping pace with us for about half a mile! It was absolutely the greatest experience and a chance of a lifetime for some of the passengers who had never been able to see such a sight. We love having them here for all of us to enjoy."*

John Dion
LakeTahoeAdventures.com
Lake Tahoe 530-577-2940

Barbara Cunningham, of Lake Tahoe Adventures ATV Tours, said: *"We don't have a lot of people asking to see them, but we always mention there's a possibility of seeing wild horses on our tours, they get excited, but I have to say there's no guarantee of spotting them. Since BLM did the last big roundup, the horses have not returned in numbers where it would be easier to spot them. A pity, as when we do see them, our clients love it. I have a client who just adopted two from this area and has booked a reservation for a 4-hour trip, just in the hopes he can spot the bands where his came from so as to study them."* [She requested my sending additional brochures to them.]

Barbara Flannigan
Cottonwood Creek Arabians
Reno 775-782-3057

Barbara: *“There are no horses anywhere in our area. We use to take people up to see them in the Pine Nut Range, but no longer.....There are some wild horses contained in a fenced area near us, but we don't like to show them to people as they aren't able to see them running free.”*

2. NORTHWESTERN NEVADA

Kathy and Jim Kudrna
Soldier Meadows Ranch
Gerlach 775-849-11666

Kathy Kudrna: *“I would say in the past couple of years, about 50 to 60 of our guests have specifically asked about wild horses and where they can see them. Of course it isn't always possible to view them as herds move around and aren't in the same place they might have been the day before. And, sometimes wild horses are so elusive, people on a visit don't see them at all. For the guests who take the time to get in their vehicles and take off on one of the ranch roads, they almost always are able to view some of the bands.*

“Generally, guests' comments usually include things like, they are surprised at what good shape they are in. And, for that reason, others have mentioned they think the horses they see on the range are our horses and not wild ones. I had a couple recently witness the birth of a wild foal and they were surprised it happen close enough for them to see while they were in their vehicle parked along side of the road.

“People are often thrilled to see that wild horses live in fairly close proximity to the ranch. Many who specifically come to see wild horses, and actually get to, are always excited and take lots of photos. And, many say they are coming back with friends and/or family.”

3. CENTRAL NEVADA

Jeannie Nations
Wild Horse Photographic Tours
Ely 775-591-0376

Jeanne: *“I get people everyday from all over the world visiting my website, a lot of them wanting to come out to experience the once in a lifetime adventure of seeing our magnificent wild horses, our living legends of the West. But unfortunately, now I only do a selective few workshops each Summer, as the number of wild horse herds have declined so drastically because there have been so many BLM roundups in recent years. I fear if I book a lot of people, I may not always find the wild horses for them to photograph. I don't want to take a chance on them being disappointed, so I mostly take repeat customers out and a few new ones every year.*

I think it would be so great for rural White Pine County to be more proactive in making sure we have plenty of healthy wild horse herds for people to photograph, enjoy and be able to watch the interactions of the different herd dynamics in their natural habitats. When my customers come to town, they stay at our hotels, eat at our restaurants and shop at our stores. And, with this poor economic times we're in, tourism dollars are very badly needed in rural counties.

Unfortunately, the amount of viable reproducing wild horse herds seems to be getting smaller every year on our public lands. If the large number of wild horses and burros being taken off our public lands continues, I fear in the not-so-distance future, we will see them no longer.....

Comments received from a repeat workshop customer, Mary P. of New York: *“I can say from firsthand experience your photography workshop taught me more about photography and wild horses than I thought was imaginable. I came to your class not knowing a thing about art nor photography, but I came away with a love for both photography and the West.*

I hope people reading my comments will know they do not have to be an experienced photographer to participate; all they need is the desire to see the world, and of course, the wild horses through a different lens. I whole heartedly recommend to anyone looking for a unique experience - along with the opportunity to see nature and the wild horses up close - most definitely should plan on attending one of Jeanne's workshops.”

Rebecca Elkins
Horse-n-Fly Guest Ranch
Monitor Valley
775-761-7777

Rebecca: *"We have seen quite a few horses. There appears to be three bands we see consistently in our neighborhood: one in the area of Bottle Summit (north end of Monitor Valley between 5th cattle guard and Hwy 50...a beautiful band of white/grays), a second band in Butler Creek and the third in Moores Creek /Northumberland area. I haven't seen any burros in the Monitor Valley, but I have been doing a lot of roads research in southern Nye and cannot begin to count the burros in Amargosa, Pahrump Valley and Beatty. Also, see some wild horses in the historic Johnnie Mining area.)"*

4. NORTHEASTERN NEVADA

John Collett
Cowboy John Tours
Elko 775-353-7825

John: *"We haven't been able to take very many tours out this year because we still have so much snow on the ground in the Ruby Mountains. People really like seeing the wild horses and have even put specific information on such tours in our website. Elko is a busy place with lots going on. I know you have your brochures in the Chamber office."* [I asked John if he'd email other locations in the area where it would be helpful to have some of our brochures, and he said he would.]

5. EASTERN NEVADA

Great Basis Expeditions
By John Breitrick
Ely 775-238-0380

John: *"As I mainly do geological type of tours, I don't really have people call me specifically to see the Wild Horses. But, we do sight them in various areas – not in large numbers – but enough so my clients delight in seeing them."*

Robin Crouch
Hidden Canyon Guest Ranch
Ely 775-234-7172

Robin: *"Our demographics have changed in the last few years. Basically, we're only a bed and breakfast ranch now. We talk about the wild horses but we have so few of them in our area, it's seldom we see them."*

6. SOUTHEASTERN NEVADA

Jule Wadsworth
Private tour guide
Caliente
775-962-2784

Julie: *"We do get inquiries and we've taken out one couple this year. But, the weather has made it extremely hard to even go on the roads where you can usually see wild horses."*

7. SOUTHERN NEVADA

Big Jim and Georgie Sage

Cowboy Trail Rides – Red Rock Canyon

Las Vegas 702-397-2457

Georgia: *“Unfortunately, we hardly ever see any wild horses after the last big roundup BLM did.....But, we are seeing more burros, which are guests enjoy watching. Many of the horses on our string are Mustangs we’ve adopted from the BLM. The riders especially enjoy riding them. They often comment they can now go back home and tell their friends they actually rode a wild horse! It is so sad, though, that so many of these Mustangs have been taken away, never to return. A great loss.....”*

The Allure of Wild Horses Draw Tourists from Far and Wide

by Bonnie Matton/Dayton Courier/June 2011

Over the weekend of April 9-10, 2011, I was privileged to take two tours out to see some of Nevada's wild horses living in the Stagecoach area. As President of Wild Horse Preservation League, I receive many calls, emails and letters from people – not only in Nevada, but other states, and other countries as well.

They all ask the same question: "Where can we go to see wild horses?" In 2008, the League established a Wild Horse Adventure Program, with the goal being not only to provide tourists the opportunity to see the wild ones, but to help bring much needed monies into rural Nevada communities through ecotourism. Tourists coming to our state not only would be hiring tour guides, but staying in hotel and motel accommodations and eating out in restaurants.

On Saturday, April 9, 2011, we gathered at the Carson Plains Casino restaurant to plan the morning's activities. Present were Samantha Szesciorka, News Producer and Jeff Foss, Cameraman, who are from KTVN Channel 2 News in Reno. Szesciorka is doing a two-part series on Nevada's wild horses which will be shown in the near future.

Jeremy Davidson, a new Wild Horse Preservation League member living in Dayton, is putting together a PowerPoint presentation on the plight of the Mustang which he will make available to the public.

Tina Broderick, is owner of Sonny Boys Wild Horse Tours out of Reno. Though having been taking tours to Nevada's back country for some time, she has just began taking wild horse sighting tours in the Hidden Valley area outside of Reno. She joined us to expand her knowledge for wild horse touring trips in the Dayton and surrounding areas.

Willis Lamm is President of Least Resistance Training Concepts in Stagecoach. This non-profit organization is most active in putting on clinics for people who are planning to adopt a Mustang or already own one and want to learn additional training techniques.

Lucas, Carla and Carl Passero were visiting from California. Recently, Carl's wife passed away. She had never seen a wild horse but left in her will the desire to donate money to a wild horse organization. The Passero Family made a donation to the League in her memory and were able to join us on this tour.

Deniz Bolbol is a representative of the non-profit organization, In Defense of Animals. Located in California, she travels to many other states to help protect America's wild horses.

On Sunday, April 10, 2011, I took out the second group, which consisted of Mark DeSautel, owner of a long-time art gallery in Lake Tahoe and had put on a fundraiser the previous year for Lacy J. Dalton's organization, Let 'em Run. Accompanying him on the tour were Eddie Almeyda and Andy Horstmanshoff, a photographer from the Reno area who had never taken pictures of wild horses. He was so thrilled at the sight of these beautiful animals, he reminded me of a kid in a toy store, not knowing what to look at next!

Willis Lamm met up with us on the backroads of Stagecoach. He brought along Willy Klaeson from Sweden. He is a writer and television media producer and is making a documentary which follows wild horses recently captured, all the way through the Warm Springs Prison Training Program to their eventual adoption. This program is good for both horses and participants. From these special animals, the inmates learn patience, understanding, respect and caring of another living soul, which greatly helps them deal with the outside world when they are eventually released. Whereas the percentage of other prisoners returning back to prison is approximately 80 percent, the inmates participating in this program, the return rate is only 20 percent.

Klaeson has fallen in love with this part of the world, and is seriously thinking of purchasing property in the area so he can live here part of each year.

Lamm also brought along two visitors from California who own a Mustang, but had never had the opportunity to see Mustangs actually living in the wild.

It was a thrilling and fascinating day for all. Both groups spend many hours observing the different bands. For survival, each adult member of a band, or family, has an important role to play. The stallions constantly are watching over them. When he became anxious they might be in danger from us, he quickly started pushing his 'harem' away, sometimes actually cutting in between us and his band to protect them. He did the same when coming in contact with other bands in the area. The oldest mare in a band is called the 'lead mare'. Her job is to lead the 'family' quickly away to another location where she feels they would be the safest.

The young colts, or studs, are like teenagers, play-fighting each other in preparation for the time when they are old enough to try to steal a mare, or filly, away from another stallion. When they became approximately two years of age, stallions will actually kick them out of their bands. Sometimes, until they can begin creating 'harems' of their own, the studs will join together as 'Bachelor Bands' or 'Band of Brothers' for protection. I commented to the groups, "They always look to me as if they need a mother or a wife!"

Later in April, there is will be a couple arriving from The Netherlands specifically to see our wild horses on the open range. Wout Overbeeke owns and operates Overbeeke Horseprofessionals (www.horseprofessionals.nl) which specializes in taking groups out for inclusive trips, meaning away from their every day world. The participants come from many different areas of expertise, and will be taught how to join forces in working together to reach the same goals they are seeking.

Overbeeke be using the observations of Nevada's wild horses to accomplish their goals. Mark Terrell, of Wild Horse Photographic Tours in Dayton, will be their guide during each day out. An independent contractor will be providing the different camp sites each night during the five-day period they will be out.

In today's world, I strongly feel America's wild horses have come to represent freedom and independence to many people in the world. Fortunately, we can now offer tour trips to visitors who want to actually witness these magnificent animals in person, a way to not only to study and learn from them, but to enjoy our beautiful state of Nevada as well.

For additional tour information, contact Tina Broderick at www.RenoWildHorseTours.com, Mark Terrell at www.wildhorsesofnevadaphoto.com and www.WildHorseAdventure.net or call 775-220-6806.

Tourism of the equine kind brings money to Lyon County, Northern Nevada

Written by Bonnie Matton/Special to the Dayton Courier



TJ Hartman and Krista Margenau pose with wild horses in the background during their vacation to the foothills of Northern Nevada's Virginia Range. / Bonnie Matton/Dayton Courier



Wild horses pictured here in January graze near tourists who came from Chicago specifically to see the free-roaming equines. / Bonnie Matton/Dayton Courier.

When people plan a vacation they rarely think about whom their tourism spending benefits -but from the receiving end of that spending the "where" people vacation is important.

While the BLM and NDA scramble to remove wild horses from the public lands in Lyon County, Northern Nevada and elsewhere across the nation, there are many people throughout the world who long to take vacation to see the wild horses before they are free-roaming no more.

That's what Krista Margeneau and TJ Hartman did in early January. The couple left their Chicago home to take their dream vacation to of all places west-central Lyon County.

With the help of members of the Dayton-based Wild Horse Preservation League the couple fulfilled their dream in the foothills of the Virginia Range. They saw free-roaming wild horses on their vacation designed specifically for that purpose.

Margeneau said, "My husband and I had always planned on coming to Nevada to observe wild horses. But, when friends relocated to [Reno](#), we took it as a "sign" that it was time to go."

Hartman said their friends told them about the League of wild horse advocate's and called the organization's president to ask if someone could take out to see free-roaming wild horses.... it was as simple as that, Margeneau said.

The League constantly receives communications regarding wild horses from people around the world. That's why, in 2008, the organization applied for a grant from the Nevada Commission on Tourism -to help establish a Wild Horse Adventure Program. The group not only wanted to provide tourists with the opportunity to see the wild horses, but to bring tourism money to Lyon County and Northern Nevada through wild horse ecotourism.

Margeneau said: "I have loved horses my entire life. But, seeing the wild horses in person was truly a moving experience and gave me a new appreciation for them. Their familial bonds and their will to survive was just amazing to me."

Both Hartman and Margeneau said that in the future, they would like to relocate closer to where the wild horses roam. Once that happens, their goal is to find a way to adopt and give some of the wild horses a good home.

The second part of their goal is to help children with special needs by training and using their horses for the purpose of helping these children by providing them with a physical and mental therapy program.

For additional information on those wanting to see the wild horses in Northern Nevada visit the League's website at www.WildHorseAdventure.net or call 775-220-6806.

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