

# SPANISH BARB HORSE ASSOCIATION



Summer—2013  
Newsletter

Our 41st  
Anniversary

*Photo-Amerind Museum Event >*

## ASSOCIATION HISTORY STARTS HERE...

We hope you enjoy and learn from some reprints of articles from past SBBA/SBHA publications.

More coming soon on Spanishbarb.com.



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- Have you paid your 2013 Membership Dues? Please support the organization & do so.
- Remember, SBHA is formerly SBBA; Spanish Barb Breeders Association.
- Help promote these horses. Spread the word about your wonderful Spanish Barbs!



## SBBA HISTORY & HORSES

**Excerpts of 2001 article written by Jean Walsh, SBBA past-president, and from 1972 Spanish-Barb Breeders pamphlet.**

The SBBA was founded in 1972 by two individuals, Peg Cash and Susan Field, who were devoted to the Iberian/Barb descended horses which the Conquistadors brought to the Western Hemisphere. Both individuals had been involved with the Spanish Mustang Registry, but found their philosophy to not coincide with their own goals. The founders of the SMR seemed content at that time to preserve and perpetuate the horses as they were found in the late 19th, early 20th century. The founders of the SBBA desired to carry the goal one step further by not only preserving and perpetuating, but breeding to restore the horse closer to the original. Time and circumstance had wrought changes in the horses

and the SBBA founders desired to try to recapture some of the original characteristics.

Susan Field was the experienced horsewoman. She had been closely associated with the Brislawns, founders of the SMR and the McKinleys, owners of the McKinley-Romero Ranch near Los Lunas, NM, which harbored an historic group of wild horses of obvious Spanish descent. Thus Susan was the individual who selected the foundation stock for the SBBA. Peg Cash handled the business end and was also the individual responsible for doing research on the horse before it reached this hemisphere, then compiling and putting together the promotional material for the Registry. Susan Field was the individual who furnished the more contemporary history on the horses, having been closely associated with Bob and Ferdinand Brislaw as well as the Margaret and Weldon McKinley.

The first stallion to go into the new Registry was a horse named Scarface (Red Ant x Canyada) from one of the McKinley ranches. Scarface



Mare: Coche Tres, PF-10  
Scarface x Coche Two

was not an unknown quantity. Both he and his sire, Red Ant, were registered with SMR (Red Ant, SMR-82; Scarface, SMR-118). The McKinleys are cattle people who purchased a ranch from the D.D. Romero family in the early 1950s. A McKinley Ranch advertisement circa 1967 stated "Our horses have run on a ranch owned by one Spanish family for 140 years. Prior to this, the land was Spanish Territory dating back to Coronado's conquest. Come and see them or write for information. Our stallion, Scarface, is standing at stud." Scarface would prove himself to be a very pre-potent sire, one that could be successfully crossed with all the bloodlines to follow, as well as one that

*(Continued on page 2)*



Rawhide, Foundation Stallion PF-2



## SBBA HISTORY & HORSES *Continued*

could be successfully close line bred.

The second stallion to go into the Registry was a Gaskin bred horse named Rawhide. His pedigree was straight Belsky blood. Rawhide's ancestors were bred by Ilo Belsky, a rancher well known for breeding excellent using horses of Spanish descent. Ilo referred to his horses as "Spanish Cowponies" and he devoted his entire life to producing quality Spanish Cowponies. The Belsky line was the first to be inducted into the Registry with a history of selective breeding by a rancher.

The next horse to be inducted into the Registry and to become the third foundation bloodline was a mare named Coche Two. Coche Two had been registered with SMR as Coche II SMR-88 and she was a granddaughter of Buckshot, SMR 1 on the top and Ute, SMR 2 on the bottom (Cochise, SMR-33 x Cola, SMR -18). Coche Two was a product of line breeding as her grand-sires (Buckshot & Ute), top and bottom were full brothers and both those horses were

products of having bred sire to daughter.

The fourth horse to be inducted and to be the basis for the fourth foundation bloodline was a mare named A-ka-wi (SMR-87). A-ka-wi had likewise been registered with SMR, having been bred by Shane Brislawn and foaled in 1961. A-ka-wi's sire was Choctaw, SMR-66 and her dam was Shawnee, SMR-31. And she was a granddaughter of Yellow Fox, SMR-3 on the bottom.

Scarface, Rawhide, Coche Two and A-ka-wi became the original four bloodlines within the SBBA Registry. Each of these individuals had documented breeding for at least one generation. They were assigned the numbers Permanent Foundation-1, PF-2, PF-3 and PF-4 and were about as diverse in their breeding as was available at that time. SMR 1 and SMR 2 were full brothers and SMR 3 was off a Cheyenne reservation so neither of the mares was related, nor were they in any way related to Scarface or Rawhide.

Several years later a fifth bloodline was established with

the inclusion into the Registry of a horse named Sun. Sun had been registered in the SMR registry by his owner Ferdinand Brislawn under the name of Sioux Chief. He was a known son of SMR 4, San Domingo, a horse that had been obtained from the Santo Domingo Pueblo. His dam was a daughter of Ute, SMR 2. Sun became P-20 after having proved himself by consistently producing horses of Iberian/Barb phenotype. While the Sun bloodline is considered one of the foundation lines, he did not carry a PF number due to his entrance into the registry later than the other foundation numbered horses. It would be almost 25 years before another strain, the Wilbur-Cruce Mission Horse, would be included in the SBBA Registry. And even then, the strain would be kept in a separate division for observation of production and awaiting it being crossed with the other strains.

The SBBA took five strains to work with and endeavored to form a gene pool which could produce horses closer to the original Iberian Barb horse as depicted in the history and art of the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. Each of the strains contributed to the whole, some maybe a bit more than others, but all contributed and likewise, the use of all five strains served to keep a healthy gene pool.

In order to protect the known bloodlines of the true Spanish-Barb, the SBBA established the

use of three divisions in its registry. Horses numbered in the Permanent division are over two years of age and from proven bloodlines, conforming in all ways to the Breed Standard. Horses numbered in the Tentative division are 1) all horses from SBBA registered parents that are under two years of age, 2) those of known pedigree but which must further prove themselves. Appendix division is for those few horses which display outstanding traits and conformation of the breed, but have neither sire nor dam registered with the SBBA. At age 2, horses in the Tentative (now called General) or Appendix divisions can may apply for advancement to the Permanent division.

Culling is necessary in any breeding program. The SBBA carefully looked at each foal and followed its' progress to maturity. If a stallion or mare lacked the ability to consistently produce foals that would mature into the range of acceptability as being a part of the breed, then they were culled. If one continually accepts mediocrity, one ends up breeding mediocrity to mediocrity and what can the future hold except more mediocrity? If horses are referred to as a breed, then that group of related animals should show certain inherited characteristics that separate them from

*(Continued on page 3)*



Scarface, PF-1, First Foundation stallion of SBBA.



### SBBA HISTORY & HORSES Continued

other members of the same species.

The SBBA and its' horses have over the years remained a bit apart from the other organizations breeding Spanish descended stock. The SBBA continued to monitor production through inspecting each horse applied on for registration. Just because a foal was produced by a SBBA registered sire and dam did not mean it would automatically be registered. Each foal had to stand on its own merit and its application passed before official inspectors.

There is any number of choices available to individuals interested in the Iberian/Barb descended horses of the Con-

quistadors. I believe the last time Dr. Phil Sponenberg mentioned a number to me there were at least 13 of them. It then becomes a matter of investigating/studying the various registries/organizations and their horses, weighing what you learn about them and their goals and then deciding where you choose to be.



*Jean Walsh and her SB stallion  
Gran Talisman, P-xxxx*

Stallion Amigo Mio,  
PF-51

Scareface x Cochi  
Tres



Stallion Apache, P32  
Sun x Romero Belle

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This Article Reprinted from 1975 Spanish-Barb Quarterly. Author is P.J. Wilson, which is a pen name for Peg Cash, co-founder of the SBHA



## What IS a Spanish-Barb?

by P.J. Wilson

The Spanish-Barb is first and foremost a rare and historically significant breed. The possession of 5 lumbar vertebrae is not the sole determining factor in whether or not a horse belongs to the Spanish-Barb breed, any more than 5 lumbar vertebrae, or the presence of an additional vertebrae make, or deny, an Arabian as being a true member of that breed. Then, what does make a horse a Spanish-Barb? The answer lies in the relatively simple explanation which applies to all breeds; it is the common, shared background, bloodlines and characteristics which determines whether or not an animal is a member of a particular breed, as well as the animal's genetic ability to consistently pass on those uniform traits to their progeny.

The Arabian, the Morgan, the Clydesdale, or any established breed; all carry definite physical characteristics which are immediately recognizable as belonging to a particular breed family. Each breed carries the distinctive traits and conformation which differ from other groups of the equine species; set characteristics which set them apart. Predetermined genetic traits do not occur through either chance or random choice. Quite the contrary...a great deal of thought and planning figures into the development of a breed. Nature creates a species, but as in the case of canines and equines, man creates the majority of the breeds belonging to those species.

There appears to be some confusion in the minds of a number of people in relation to the basic differences between a breed of horse and what is commonly referred to as a type; and with good reason. In the past there have been several publications, or papers, ascribing themselves to the Spanish-Barb horse, the present-day Barb horse (the only true breed known by this name is the North African Barb), and of course, the mustang. Several writers have mistakenly lumped all of these horses together and referred to them, or made the claim that they are one and the same. It is no wonder then that those who are not totally familiar with the fixed genetic inheritance that combines to form a definite breed, are confused. Therefore, in response to the questions that have

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Continued on next page...



Continued ... What Is A Spanish Barb, Article Reprinted from 1975 Spanish-Barb Quarterly.

arisen, and the misconceptions that have originated due to incomplete information, the following explanation of the horses involved, as well as a few of the realities of history, may help to clarify the reasons for the separate classifications of these decidedly different horses.

Fundamentally the problem revolves around the inherent genetic differences found between types, which in some ways resemble known breeds, and the true breeds themselves. In early times the horses developed and bred in North Africa took their name from the Barbary States of Africa (Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco) where they were bred, and became known as the Barb horse of the Moors. This venerable breed stood between 14 and 15 hands high, depending upon whether they had been bred in the dry, arid Atlas Mountain area, or on the plains nearer to the coast. The breed many times lacked chestnuts entirely, or at times the chestnuts were absent only on the hind legs. Skeletons have been found in Africa which reveal that some members of the breed carried only 5 lumbar vertebrae. When the Moors invaded Spain in 711 A.D., the Barb horse had long been a very ancient breed. Today the pure Barb horse, in his native Africa, is practically extinct. Although the Spaniards imported a number of pureblooded Barb horses to the Americas, more than three centuries ago, the blood became so intermixed with that of other breeds during the preceding decades that the possibility of discovering any pureblooded North African Barb horses, roaming the American "badlands" today, is highly improbable to say the very least.

Between the 16th and 18th centuries, the wild horses found in the southeastern United States, and those spreading over the western half of America, were of true Spanish blood. However, since the middle of the 19th century (the 1800's) the mustang, or free-roaming horse, has been subjected to a constant influx of outside horses, carrying many separate bloodlines, in their areas of habitation. As a result, during the past century and a quarter, the wild horses have become increasingly cross-bred. A horse of mixed breeding, carrying the genes of an undetermined number of unknown and highly diverse ancestors, does not often produce foals showing a set consistency in either conformation or size. The genetic make-up of any cross-bred horse contains a culmination of genes, contributed by generations of unrecorded breeds and crossbreeds, resulting in pure speculation as to the horse's bloodlines or history. Whenever cross-breeding is continued, the resulting foals may possess the phenotypic (outward) appearance of any of their many and varied ancestors. However, with care taken in breeding, horses of mixed blood, caught wild or from out of feral sire and dam, often produce offspring which are attractive using horses and are of a "type" generally called mustang. Should the mix-blood horse be the result of crossbred parents other than those with a feral ancestry, the animal is simply called a grade horse.

A breed, on the other hand, like the Spanish-Barb or the modern Thoroughbred, is a group of individuals which possess distinctive traits which are not common to all members of the equine species. These characteristics are brought about, and stabilized, through generations of controlled breeding so as to become firmly established and sufficiently well fixed enough to be consistently and uniformly transmitted. Such traits are determined by inheritance; mainly origin, both geographical





Continued ... What Is A Spanish Barb, Article Reprinted from 1975 Spanish-Barb Quarterly.

and genetic(blood); environment, and most important, man's purpose and selectivity in breeding.

The Spanish-Barb is, and for many centuries has remained a breed; not merely a type.

The Spanish-Barb's centuries of breeding, in Spain and then later in America, fixed the genetic inheritance of the breed for the many generations which were to follow. However, the pure bloodlines of those succeeding generations were very nearly wiped out through the cross-breeding practices of those who planned to hold on to the exceptional abilities of the Spanish horse, while attempting to create a completely American breed.

The most recent chapter in the story of the Spanish-Barb lies interwoven with that of the growth of America. The various uses of this versatile breed in the past, as well as the circumstances of their survival, endows them with an unique history and is a determining factor in both the abilities and attributes carried by the surviving descendants of the breed today.

The early Spanish-Barbs were utilized, by the colonists, as foundation stock for several of the most popular American breeds of the present; most notably the Thoroughbred (refer to the 1st edition of the Jockey Club Stud Book) and in the development of the Quarter horse. This constant use as a foundation animal contributed greatly to the breed being forced into near oblivion by the beginning of the 20th century.

The unusual history of the Spanish-Barb began, not in America, and not altogether in Spain, but in the scrub and brush mountains and the dry plains of North Africa. Here the Zentes, an extraordinary horse-warrior tribe of Berbers, joined with the Muslims in 711 A.D.. Seven thousand of those superb horsemen made up the initial force which invaded Spain, and the 700 year occupation of Spain by those Moors brought about monumental changes in the life of the people and, most especially, in the breeding of horses.

The horses bred by the Moors, throughout Andaluz, by crossing their agile, desert-bred Barb horses on the existing stock of Spain, became world famous during the Middle Ages. The conquered peoples of Spain, chaffing under their enforced domination, finally united their efforts and slowly regained possession of their country; driving the last of the Moors back into North Africa by 1492. However, the noted horses, bred and raised by the former Saracen masters, remained in Spain. Imported extensively, from 1493 until the Spanish Embargo in 1520, by the Spanish adventurers to their breeding ranches in the Carribean, the Spanish-Barb horse became the means by which Spain conquered and subdued the Aztec and Inca Empires, and carried her dauntless explorers on the arduous treks over the immense, uncharted western wilderness, as well as through the densely wooded southeastern portions of North America.

The Spanish-Barbs were the first breed of horse in America; although not always recognized as such. They have been known by many different names throughout the 453 years they have been raised in this country. The Spanish horse, or Spanish breed became the first designation, and





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Chickasaw horse the second. But the blood remained the same. Those Chickasaws, as the English colonists referred to them were... "an agile blocky type, easily recognized and seldom exceeding fourteen hands in height." The colonists utilized the Spaniard's horses under both plow and saddle, while racing them at every available opportunity. The eventual importation of English racers, which at that time were line-bred Oriental/Barbs (some with a touch of Irish blood), led to the crossing of the Spanish/Chickasaw horses to the English racers; basically Spanish-Barb to Barb. This union created the Colonial Short Horse, later known as the Celebrated American Quarter Running Horse. All of those deep-bodied horses, averaging 14 hands and under, carried the same pre-potent genes; those of the Barb. The Spanish horses raised by the missions and ranches in the vast territory between the Arkansas River and Mexico, not only populated the entire western area, but were transferred east, furnishing most of the broodmares for the imported stallions of the eastern colonies. The Plantation horse of the early South resulted from selecting the easiest-gaited horses, acquired from out of Mexico, and breeding them to "thoroughly-bred" or English racers. Although they may have been called Spanish, Chickasaw, Colonial, Western or Plantation horse, their heritage remained Spanish-Barb/Oriental. In fact, right up until the time of the American acquisition of the Spanish held western territories in 1803, the blood of the Barb reigned supreme, and with good reason. Those graceful, agile, fleet little horses were undeniably rugged, sure-footed and enduring; much needed and sought after traits in frontier times. It would appear that the very nature of the Spanish horse's attributes contributed to the near "end" of the Spanish-Barb breed on the continent of North America.

The expanding western cattle industry of the 1800's, inherited in large part from the Spanish people, placed tremendous demands on the men who watched over the cattle, and on the horses upon which they worked. The new westerners looked to the Mexican vaquero; his gear and his horsemanship and began to incorporate the experienced vaquero's talents and finesse into their own way of working, riding and handling both cattle and horses. They also took a close look at the horses ridden by those Spanish/Mexicans.

The Spanish breed had become smaller and more wiry than it had originally been when first brought into the western himesphere. The harsh, arid western lands had, over the centuries, brought about the creation of a tough, lean equine that was able to subsist on the meager forage that the semi-desert country had to offer. Those animals which were raised in the plains areas fared better in both size and girth. Another contributing factor to the subtle changes to be found in the horses of Spain was that by the late 1700's many Spanish ranchers had either forgotten, or chose to ignore, the breeding practices of their forefathers and were no longer producing the symetrically formed horses of which Spain and her people had always been so proud. However, the genes carried by those horses remained; merely waiting for selective breeding to bring them to the surface.

Wanting a larger, heavier horse than the Spanish-western horse of the late 18th century, the Anglo-Americans of the ranching West began horse breeding endeavors of their own. Incorporating stallions from the east and midwest, they crossed the cattle-wise Spanish mares from the south-



Continued ... What Is A Spanish Barb, Article Reprinted from 1975 Spanish-Barb Quarterly.

west and Mexico with the more popular eastern stallions of the day. The long sought after, and eventual success of that cross-breeding brought about the creation of the modern stock horse, but resulted in the almost total destruction of the pure bloodlines carried by the Spanish-Barb breed.

At one time in our past, the Spanish horses of North America could be found from the Eastern Seaboard to the Pacific Coast, and from the borders of Canada to the Land of Manana; but no more. Time, man and circumstance bring about many changes and had it not been for the relatively few horses retained and bred by several dedicated people, the pure bloodlines of the original Spanish-Barb horse would have been lost for all time. Today only the Romero-McKinley and Belsky strains, in addition to two direct descendants of the Buckshot line remain. Now, only time and a program of careful, highly selective breeding will insure the retention and continuation of these rare and valuable horses, and of the traits and abilities that have served the many races of man so faithfully and so well throughout the centuries.

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Early SBBA Mares

A-ka-wi was one of the  
foundation mares.



Mother and daughter; A-ka-wi, SBBA P-4, and Tawa-mana, SBBA P-9.



## Discovering the Horses: The Story of the Rescue of the Wilbur-Cruce Mission Horse

By Janie Dobrott

This Article Reprinted from January 1997 Spanish-Barb Journal



*Eva Wilbur-Cruce on left. Photo courtesy of Bob Zimmerman.*

Standing atop a mountain in southern Arizona, catching our breath from the steep hike, our attention is drawn to a small band of wild horses grazing far below us. This is what we hoped to see! These just might be the "horses of history" that we have read about in the book *A Beautiful Cruel Country* written by Eva Wilbur-Cruce, the elderly granddaughter of the homesteader of this ranch.

Marye Ann and Tom Thompson had driven from Willcox, Arizona to meet us at the Wilbur Ranch to look at what may be the descendants of horses brought out of Mexico in the late 1870s from Padre Kino's headquarters, Mission Dolores. Marye Ann is the registrar for the Spanish Mustang Registry, and if anyone could tell us if these horses physically fit the type, she could. After our first glimpse of the horses, we excitedly set off down the boulder strewn mountainside in a barely controlled slide to reach the bottom and to get a closer look. There, grazing before us among thorny Ocotillo cactus and prickly Mesquite trees, was a liver chestnut, medicine hat, overo, pinto stallion and his two mares; one chestnut and the other a black. Marye Ann's enthusiasm became apparent as she led us from one distantly glimpsed horse band to another until we were caught at dusk with a mountain between us and our trucks parked at the old Wilbur homestead. Fortunately it was the fall season, and we were not likely to run into any rattlesnakes in the dark, as they should have been curled up in their burrows keeping warm. We followed a deeply cut trail made by thousands of durable horse hooves, over the mountain. It led us to Arivaca creek, which was, in times of drought, the only available water. It bubbled softly by the old adobe walls of the abandoned Wilbur home.

Back at the vehicles, we recalled what we had seen that day. A band of "dog soldiers", (Old-timer's term for young bachelor stallions), including a wildly colored, flaxen maned and tailed, overo pinto with a bald face. Another medicine hat stallion, this one tobiano, and his two mares; one a bay and the other a

pinto. Also, an old grey stallion with a missing eye, who apparently had lost his mares to a younger, stronger stallion, and then several larger bands with frame overo, chestnut and bay making up their numbers; some with blue eyes. Could it be that we had discovered a remnant strain of Colonial Spanish Horse? These horses that had been isolated for over 113 years, just might be the descendants of the horses that, "Padre Kino gathered from vast herds of Spanish Barbs which had proliferated since the time of Cortez among the mission farms and ranges in Mexico. Land which had become fertile breeding grounds of numberless short-coupled, sturdy, tough horses",

(1. Frank Dobie, *Horses and Heroes*).

Dr. Phil Sponenberg DVM, PhD., representing The American Livestock Conservancy and members of the Spanish Mustang Registry, including Emmett Brislawn, "Doc" Stabler and Marye Ann Thompson, travelled to the Wilbur Ranch to see the horses in December of 1989. Fortunately, the drought had concentrated the horses along the creek and everyone was able to see a number of horses without having to hike the mountains. Upon returning, Dr. Sponenberg wrote his assessment of the herd from which a few selected quotes have been taken:

The Wilbur-Cruce horses are one of a very small handful (five would be a very optimistic estimate) of strains of horses derived from Spanish colonial days that persist as purely (or as nearly as can be determined) Spanish to the present day ... they are the



*Eva branding colts. Eva Wilbur-Cruce on left. Photo courtesy of Bob Zimmerman.*





only known "rancher" strain of pure Spanish horses that persists in the Southwest. The Wilbur-Cruce horses are of great interest because they are a nonferal strain. When comparing the Wilbur-Cruce horses to other strains he mentions that, ... they cannot claim the historic isolation that [these horses] horses have had. ... The Wilbur-Cruce horses, as a nonferal strain, are therefore truly unique. Visual examination of the Wilbur-Cruce herd indicates that the herd history is very likely accurate. The horses are remarkably uniform, and of a very pronounced Spanish phenotype.

My husband, Steve, and I lived on the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge at the time of the discovery of the Wilbur horses in 1989. Steve was the refuge wildlife biologist and when the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service purchased the Wilbur ranch, he became interested in the wild horses that had to be removed. His reading of Eva Wilbur's book lead him to contact those who might be able to help identify the horses and eventually through Marye Ann and Phil Sponenberg, the American Livestock Conservancy was brought into the picture. Because of Steve's efforts, Eva Wilbur donated her beloved herd to the ALBC and the Conservancy in turn, through Dr. Sponenberg's efforts, arranged to pay for the cost of trapping, removing and distributing the horses into breeding groups.

We were in the habit of going over to the ranch to look at the horses and continue our written inventory in the early summer of 1990. Drought had plagued the area for two years, drying up the small springs on the south end of the ranch and concentrating the horses around the two areas of the creek which had not dried up. By then, the herd which had numbered over 100 head, had become reduced by mountain lions and rustlers. Once we discovered evidence left by those who sought to steal for themselves a bit of living history; a section of fence mowed down by the herd in their panic to evade their pursuers.

Another time we discovered a young foal tied to a tree with the lasso around its neck that was used to catch it. We diligently copied the license number of the truck from our hiding place as we observed those who came back to claim the foal, throwing it into the back of their camper! They were fined and the foal confiscated, but by then it was too late to reunite mother and her offspring.

The young foals also made easy prey for the lions. Over the years, flash-flooding had cut the banks of the creek 10 to 12 feet high, which created a vantage point for the lions to perch above the horses as they came down the tree-lined trails to water. One weekend we would see a mare with a new foal and the next weekend we would see the mare with nothing but a swollen udder to comfort her. The drought also took its toll; the ribs, backbone

and hips jutting out on the mares with foals.

The refuge then hired a man known for his expertise in catching wild livestock to begin the removal of the horses. The trappers set up a large pen made up of metal panels adjacent to the old home-stand corral with a water tank in the middle. They then fenced off the smaller of the two remaining watering holes and staked out their cowdogs on the one remaining stretch of creek where the horses could water.

The old corral had been built close to the bank of the creek and in turn this located the adjacent metal-paneled trap out over the dry wash of the creek. Towering old cottonwoods, which undoubtedly witnessed the original herd drinking under their canopies, lined the bank here. As the hot days strung out, cicada insects hummed loudly and the air seemed to suck the moisture out of every living thing.

The first horse band to enter the corral included an old, alpha mare, the only true roan left in the herd, who -is now a member of our breeding group. Eva Wilbur called her "Rosalita", and remembered her as a foal the last year they worked and lived on the ranch.



*Eva Wilbur, age 12, ready for work on the range.  
Photo courtesy of Bob Zimmerman.*



*Wilbur-Cruce Ranch, Arivaca, AZ. Horses coming to corrals. Photo courtesy of Bob Zimmerman.*

As the trap filled up with horses, the cowboys herded them into the old corral, leaving the trap empty and waiting for more. They then separated the stallions from the mares and foals, whipping up the dry soil of the corral and creating dust clouds that obscured the scene from view. Next they were loaded into bob-tailed trucks and driven to a defunct feed-lot where they were held until the last horse was caught. Only one horse was lost during this time, an overo, pinto mare that had an eye with pink skin around it. It was evident that she had an advanced case of skin cancer and had become weakened and emaciated from it.

The next move was appropriately to the rodeo grounds of "Old Tucson", a Western movie set and theme park located just west of the city. It was from here, that those who were fortunate enough to receive a breeding group, gathered to claim their prize.

Eva Wilbur-Cruce came, despite the heat, to see her equine legacy dispersed. She arrived wheel-chair bound from a recent stroke, but attired in her straw hat, sheltered under an umbrella and pleased to see so many others displaying esteem for the "little rock horses" that she had lived and worked with for over 40 years.

The temperature that day broiled up to 114 degrees, a record setting scorcher! It seemed that a continual intravenous drip would be the only way to keep our bodies hydrated. It was in this oven of heat that the vet was scheduled to inspect horses and draw blood for typing; first

the stallions, then the dry mares, and then the seven mares and foals that had survived the lions. They were pushed into chutes, blindfolded, their markings recorded, and a sticky patch with a number slapped on their rumps.

Quoting from an article in *The American Livestock Conservancy News*, Dr. Sponenberg commented on the bloodtyping:

We held our breath until the results were back, and were relieved that they were consistent with the history related to us by Mrs. Wilbur-Cruce. These were

indeed purely Spanish ranch horses, and our efforts were all for the good and worthwhile end of saving this remnant.

The processing of the horses was finished and now it was up to the new owners to figure out how to load their wild horses into the trailers and beat it out of the heat towards Oklahoma, Texas, and California.

Our group of five went with the herd assigned to the Arizona Pioneer Living History Museum in Phoenix. Because we lived on the refuge and there had been so much controversy over the removal of the horses, (some would have liked to see the horses stay in a group on their historical site) we had to wait to receive permission to bring our horses home.

We drove the three hours to Phoenix every weekend for the next seven months to work with the horses. During this time, we used "The Jeffery Method" of handling wild stock, as suggested by Phil Sponenberg. The method consists of catching the horse in a confined area



*Eva's husband, Marshall Cruce, Wilbur Ranch, 1964. Photo courtesy of Bob Zimmerman.*





with a long pole with a noose attached. The handler then makes "invitational pulls", of the rope, alternating sides to teach the horse to give to pressure and step toward the handler. It is a slow process, no matter the method, to gentle a wild horse! It is an experience that taught me much about body language, both horse and human, and above all to slow down.

Rosalita, (now named Dolores, after Kino's mission), the mare that Eva had petted as a foal, was gentle enough that we were able to start her under saddle in August, two months after removal from the ranch. I rode the mare at the museum's dedication of its new corral, built in the mission style, for the public display of their breeding group. Eva Wilbur attended and was able to see some of what was being accomplished with the horses.

We finally received permission to bring our horses home in January of 1991. Now we had more consistency in our gentling process. One memory that stands out distinctly in my mind, occurred that spring after the horses had started to shed. Magdalena, a particularly sensitive mare, was tied to the fence and I was slowly and carefully currying loose hair from her back. There was a light breeze blowing and as I lifted the curry, a round, curry-shaped patch of hair became airborne and then gently fell to rest on Magdalena's rump. She startle-jumped a foot upwards and I startle-jumped three feet backwards, both our springs were wound tight that day! In all the time it took us to gentle our little group, and as frightened as the horses were in the beginning, not one ever showed any aggression toward us, never offering to bite or kick. As anyone knows who has worked closely with this breed, these horses are as exceptional in their intelligence as they are in their temperaments.

Since then, Steve and I have moved to New Mexico to manage a large ranch. The terrain is very similar to that of



*Author, Jane Dobrott on her 1st generation Wilbur-Cruce Spanish Barb, Pitiquito.*

the home-range of the Wilbur horses; steep and rocky. We are continuing the tradition of raising the youngsters in rough country, and as they have been started under saddle, they have proven to be balanced and savvy, and run with confidence over the rocky hills.

Standing atop a mountain in New Mexico, mounted on a pinto Wilbur-Cruce Mission Horse, I look out over the grassy valley at our mares, foals and youngsters. These are what we had hoped they'd be, "the horses of history", the descendants of the horses that Padre Kino brought to his Mission Dolores. We are the keepers of Eva Antonia Wilbur-Cruce's legacy, her beloved "little rock horses", and it is a privilege.



*Steve Dobrott working with foundation W-C, Geronimo.*

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU to JANIE & STEVE DOBROTT

Without their curiosity, actions, dedication & sharing spirit, the Wilbur-Cruce strain of the Spanish Barb may have been lost forever. They are not only responsible for recognizing the uniqueness these horses, but for helping most of the W-C Breeders to get started with our own breeding programs. Since joining the SBHA, they have worked as board members, Registrar, President, and resident artist.

Where would we be without them?



SO, WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW ?

## Discover the Horse that Discovered America

Special Promotional Event Held at the Amerind Museum in Dagoon, Arizona



On April 13, 2013 the Amerind Foundation was once again gracious in hosting another fabulous event with our Spanish Barbs and celebrating the expansion of their art gallery that



features a new Western Art Exhibit. We had perfect weather and started the day off an opening ceremony featuring our Spanish Barbs in a flag ceremony. Then onto conformation clinic, history slide show, obstacle demonstrations, Native American speakers and artists, raffles, art vendor food and horse demonstrations



with Darcie Litwicki , David Feister, and Joe Campbell. This year we exhibited 10 Spanish Barbs for the public to meet and chat with their owners. In addition to all that, the Amerind Museum, grounds, art gallery, new art exhibit and gift shop were also there for all to enjoy. We had over 600 people in attendance, it was a great day for all!

Photos from upper left: Joe Campbell/Zapata, David Feister/Ulsana, Darcie Litwicki/Enrique, Jane Dobrott/Lorenzo, Apache man, David Feister, Joe Campbell, Joe Campbell, Becky Chandos, Apache woman, Group-Marjorie Dixon, Becky Chandos, Silke Schneider, Jane Dobrott, Dikki VanHelsland, Deni Mitchell, Center: Jude Wasechek.

*Special thanks to Becky Chandos as Event Organizer.*







# A SPECIAL THANKS

To Amerind Museum staff, SBHA members, the Volunteers and Vendors who made the 2013 Event a Great Success.

## *SBHA Goes to Summer Camp*

by Maureen Kirk-Detberner

Picture 17 young eager little girls ages 8 - 10 riding Rosemary Gordon-Panuco's Spanish Barb, Leo and Beth Mendivil's Spanish Barb, Lorenzo. It happened on a very hot June 13, in Oro Valley, AZ

We were approached by the University of Arizona (U of A) to provide a Spanish Barb experience for their summer camp, based on Saige the American Girl doll of the year for 2013. The Saige story focuses heavily on Saige, her grandmother, and their love of the Spanish Barb horses.

SBHA members Rosemary Gordon-Panuco, Beth Mendivil and Maureen Kirk-Detberner created a Spanish Barb horses experience complete with a short talk on the horses, rides on the Spanish Barb horses, coloring pages of the horses, the SBHA informational postcards along with a breed fact sheet and raffle



prizes. Rosemary donated 4 one hour horse riding lessons and Maureen donated postcards with photos of the horses. All the girls received a raffle prize including the counselors. I'm not sure who had more fun the girls or us. It was very heartwarming

to see how much the girls loved being with the horses and how the horses seemed to enjoy all the attention from the girls.

SBHA was presented with a donation jar full of pennies, nickels, dimes and dollars that came to \$89.45! It was a great opportunity to partner with the U of A and connect with these delightful young ladies.

The U of A has asked SBHA to participate in the Tucson "Festival of Books" next March with the U of A and the author of the Saige books, Jessie Haas. This is a huge opportunity for SBHA as the Festival of Books brings over 100,000 people to the U of A.





# Insulin Resistance Primer for Barb Lovers

By Kathleen Bellmare

1. Our horses don't effectively process high levels of sugar and starch. They end up producing more insulin than their muscles can absorb and are categorized as insulin resistant. This is a metabolic disorder that can reduce both the quality and length of your horse's life.
2. Cresty necks are the first sign. Don't love your horse to death, a lean (but not skinny) barb that is well exercised is your best defense. **NO APPLES, CARROTS OR FEED WITH ANY MOLASSES IN IT!**
3. Horses do not generally develop insulin resistance until about age 12-15. So, just because a young horse has never had a problem, doesn't mean you're in the clear for the life of the animal. '
4. Early warning sign - October colic. If your horse has had several fall colics, even over a period of years, it could be telling you that it is becoming insulin resistant. Horses metabolisms change with the reduction in light, and a metabolic syndrome horse will have a harder time with the change
5. Don't give up if your horse has symptoms of laminitis! It is not something they can get over with medication or in a short amount of time. This is a situation that has built up over time, and will take much time on a balanced diet to correct.
6. Learn about your hay! Local NM hays that I have purchased have ranged in sugar and starch content from 7% to 26%. I had used the same grower of orchard grass for years and thought my horses to be very healthy, then in a drought year, 2 of my horses became laminitic. When I had the hay tested it was 26% sugar and starch. An insulin resistant horse's diet should be less than 12% sugar and starch.
7. You can't tell hay content by looking, smelling or even the type of hay it is.
8. Weather conditions in different years, and the time of cutting and baling can dramatically affect sugar and starch content. Test your hay before you buy it, or have your grower test it. Buy it in large enough lots to last you 6 months to the whole year. Testing a hay sample costs \$26.00 to get the full analysis done from equi-analytical.com. This may be the best money you can spend on your horse.
9. If the hay you've already bought is high in sugar and starch, soaking it can reduce it by as much as 20%. You can also replace some of your horses's forage requirements with molasses free rinsed, soaked beet pulp.
10. From the hay analysis, you can calculate nutritional supplement requirements (it's not that hard!). You can then get a custom supplement mixed from Horse Tech just for your hay and horses at a fraction of the cost of "bucket" supplements you buy online or at a feed-store.
11. If this is "too much" I'd be happy to help, or contact an equine nutritionist, I know a great one who has taught me much, but it's a process and I'm still learning!
12. Don't beat yourself up if your horse is having problems. My favorite saying with horses is. "ya don't know what ya don't know until you know it!"



SB-Whipper with Remi & Dax Bellmare

## A SAD LOSS...

Recently we heard that Weldon McKinley, age 82 had passed away in November of 2012. Weldon was a life long rancher who along with his lovely wife, Margaret, were caretakers of the herd of wild Spanish Barbs known as the McKinley-Romero horses. This herd of historically and genetically important horses were on the ranch when Weldon purchased it in **the 1950's from the Romero family, who had been on the ranch for over 140 years.**

Both Weldon & Margaret were both supporters of the original SBBA, owning the very first horse registered, stallion Scarface.

In August of 2005 they graciously invited the attendees of the Annual SBBA/SBHA meeting to visit the ranch & stay overnight at the ranch house. The tour took in much of the ranch including a glimpse of some of the horses. Most of us being new-comers to SBs, we felt blessed to have this time with such wonderful people.

Our condolences to Margaret & family.



Weldon & Margaret McKinley-2005





## In Remembrance

A.H. Amiga Magaju

5/14/1982 -6/10/2013

By Peg Freitag

Marie & Paul Martineau were visiting Peg and family in Nebraska the summer of 1984. Paul spotted a 2 year old copper dun filly in the pasture and climbed the fence to get a closer look. Soon after Paul was discussing with his sister-in-law if the filly was available for purchase.

Marie later stated, "You could have knocked me over with a feather!" Paul had been a self-proclaimed "non-horseman". It was Marie who had the horses as a kid and a pleasure mare at pasture home in Florida. Paul had jokingly warned Marie "not to get obsessed with horses like your sister." Who was about to become obsessed?, (family joke over the years).

Maggie had limited basic training under saddle at her young age and would require more maturity and training. Undaunted, Paul had been "bitten by the bug".

Paul returned to Nebraska in the fall to



haul Maggie home to Florida. She went on in her training, both Paul and Marie sharing in the riding. Paul was a hunter. Maggie packed deer out of the forest. Paul was very proud she didn't so much as twinge when a deer carcass was thrown over her back.

Marie and Maggie went on in further training and learning new disciplines under the tutelage of accomplished trainer and neighbor, Greta Rigley, learning dressage tests and enjoying going over jump. Marie even took Maggie in some Cross Country trials among 16 hand warmbloods. They were labeled as "the Little Lady on the Little Dun Mare".

Paul rode Maggie in Christmas Parades, Maggie went to church and gave children rides. They joined the Marion County Mounted Posse.

The Martineau's logged thousands of miles with trailer in tow and Maggie loaded to attend Spanish-Barb shows and events.

Marie accepted invitations from Florida Equine festivals to attend with Maggie & promote the Spanish-Barb.

Maggie foaled one filly, Torbellino's Spanish Angel. The mares' pasture proudly displays a large custom made sign, "Kingdom of the Sun, Registered Spanish-Barbs".

In 1992 the last distance haul with both mares in the trailer found the Martineau's on the way to Rio Grande, Ohio to take part in the festival of Spanish Horses. Paul had contacted Peg and let her know to "get your horses, tack and rig ready. We're going to convoy to Ohio".

The later years were spent with Marie dividing her riding between Maggie and Angel. Frequent rides in the forest on the beautiful Greenway Trails in Ocala, or hacking the quiet trails and fields in their neighborhood.

Maggie was retired from regular weekly rides in 2008. Occasionally she was saddled to give the great-grandchildren rides. She was a "family affair".

Maggie was buried near her barn on the Martineau property where she lived for 29 years. She will be missed and fondly remembered. Her familiar nicker in greeting to her people, a loving memory.







## New SBHA Members with their First Spanish Barbs



Becky Chandos & Zapata de Dragoon



Daryl Austermiller and  
Unico de Dragoon



J. Alfredo Mendivil &  
Xavier de Dragoon



Barb Armstrong & Corona de Dragoon



John Mayer & Gavilan de Mogollon



Ann Kirk-Schweitzer &  
Gabriela de Dragoon



Lydia Magen & Mangas Coloradas de  
Mogollon, aka Rojo



Kathryn Plauster & Ulsana de Dragoon



Polly McLain & Cinco de  
Mayo de Mogollon, aka Nickel





## AND ... WHERE ARE WE GOING?

# WHY?

By Jane Dobrott

Why do we care about the preservation of the Spanish Barb Horse? This task is a big responsibility. This breed represents something irreplaceable both in an historical and genetic context. I like to say that these horses are how **God made horses**. They haven't been changed much by the hand of man. Therefore their characteristics are unique among most breeds of today.

Nature selected individual horses that thrived in mostly difficult circumstances from the time of the conquest of America by the Spanish Conquistadors. Those individuals had hardiness, thriftiness, sensibility and adaptability. After all, their foundation was based on horses that survived weeks of being held in slings in the dark, belly of primitive, wooden sailing ships. I wonder how representatives of today's breeds would cope in the same circumstances.

The Barb horse carries genes that figure in the foundation of most other American breeds. They have the distinction of including no Arabian or Thoroughbred genes, a worldwide **rarity today**. Because we humans don't always make the best decisions when choosing breeding animals it is imperative that we preserve rare gene pools from which we can draw to inject genetic variety that represents the traits previously mentioned.

I have always been fascinated by the Wilbur-Cruce strain of Spanish Barb. Their story includes many adverse circumstances that placed them on the brink of destruction, only to be rescued at the eleventh hour. Shortly after Eva Wilbur was called home upon the death of her father, she faced a very difficult decision. She discovered that their family ranch, on Arivaca creek in Southern Arizona, was about to be lost due to non-payment of back taxes. Eva's reluctant solution was to sell their herd of "little rock horses" to the local cattle baron. A price per head was

agreed upon and Eva, with her sometimes cowboys, the Lopez brothers, herded the horses many miles to Amado in the Santa Cruz river valley south of Tucson. The cattle baron, who had repeatedly tried to force the Wilbur family off their property, told Eva he would only buy the herd for less than they had agreed thinking that Eva would accept the lesser offer to save the ranch. Eva, the eldest child in the family, had been brought up from a very young age to shoulder heavy responsibility, and as a consequence, her character was well formed. She defiantly told the Lopez boys to let the horses out of the corral and the horses headed for home at a gallop. As Eva trailed behind on horseback in the dust of the herd, the cattle baron's ranch foreman caught up to her and mysteriously told her not to worry, that everything would work out.

The next morning the foreman arrived at her door and Eva asked him in for coffee. As he was leaving he placed a tightly rolled cigarette paper on the kitchen counter, telling Eva not to open it until after he was gone. When she did, she discovered enough money within to pay the taxes. Later she learned that the foreman had asked his boss, the cattle baron, for money to pay for doctor bills for his wife. The baron had paid to rescue Eva's ranch! The beloved horses that Eva's family depended on were safe after all.

There were other events over the years that placed the horses in jeopardy but the last one was when we, the Spanish Barb Horse Association, became involved. The Wilbur-Cruce ranch had been sold and the wild herd had to be removed. The American Livestock Con-

servancy took charge and over saw the placement of the horses into experienced preservationist's herds. The SBHA recognized the value of the horses and created a registry under the umbrella of the organization. Once the horses proved themselves, they were brought into the registry as equal members.

Our registry has never been a large organization, but each of us is following Eva's example by recognizing the value of the Spanish Barb and are working to preserve them. Once again the horses are in a precarious position due to the expense of owning, breeding, showing, promoting, and seemingly, by a lack of interest. We need your help, both financially and creatively, to continue the worthy cause of the preservation of the Spanish Barb Horse.

Only 2013 foal.



### SBHA 2012-2013 DIRECTORS:

Kathleen Bellmare  
Becky Chandos  
Heidi Collings  
Marjorie Dixon  
Jane Dobrott  
Steve Dobrott  
Maggie Engler  
Maureen Kirk-Detburner,

### OFFICERS:

President	Steve Dobrott
Secretary	Silke Schneider
Treasurer	Maggie Engler
Registrar	Heidi Collings

Webmaster Maureen Kirk-Detburner  
Membership Sheila Segien  
Website: Spanishbarb.com  
Email: Info@Spanishbarb.com



## More Pics From the Past ...



Horses on McKinley Ranch



Wilbur Ranch  
mares & foals near  
corral.



Eva Wilbur-Cruce  
1920



SBHA  
PO Box 30  
Mule Creek, NM 88051