

Essay Contest Winners

First Place Noah Halupa

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Noah Halupa/Karnack TX
HOA Essay Contest Entry
April 16, 2008

SPITFIRE AND ME

Spitfire runs across the pasture into the woods, his flaxen mane blowing in the wind. He is free and well taken care of just like I am now. Our lives are the same in many ways. He is young and long legged and gangly like I am. We both love to run, play and have fun. Once, we both had a mother who gave birth to us. And just like me, when he was still very young, he had to leave his mother.

Our lives have also been very different. Spitfire was taken from his mother to so he could grow and learn to be a horse. I was taken from my mother because she did not take care of me. Both of us were sent off to live in a scary world that was different from the one we had known.—Spitfire to a herd—me to an emergency shelter and then foster care.

I now have a new home, just as Spitfire will. I have a home now where people love me and care for me and my brother. If my real mother ran into me, she would not recognize me anymore, just as Spitfire's mother would no longer recognize him as the baby she gave birth to. We have both grown and changed. In addition to getting a mom, dad, and a sister, I also got a Colonial Spanish horse family—both human and equine. I learned to ride on these wonderful horses. At my first national show, I was able to take first place in the Youth Tejas Pleasure event because of the wonderful horse who let me ride her— Willow Dance owned by Karma Farms. I had only been riding for less than a year and I had only ridden Willow once or twice before the show but she took care of me. Willow does it right even when I don't! These horses have taught me how to be responsible and care for others. I get outside and exercise in the fresh air. They help me focus on what I am doing and what is around me. Mustangs also help to keep me out of trouble with my new parents and away from video games.



Second Place

Jacob Anderson

My sister has been riding horses for two years I never thought I would like horses. I was a skateboarder. When my mom made me go out to where my sister rode, Mill Swamp Indian Horses, Steve Edwards put me on one of his horses. From that point on, I have been riding and training wild Colonial Spanish Mustangs. Specifically, the Corolla strain.

At first, I thought that the way Mr. Edwards trained the Corollas was silly. Jumping around the horse, shaking empty milk jugs filled with rocks, waving grocery store bags and shouting. This was all to desensitize them. The more I did it, the more I understood what he was trying to do. He trained the horses and taught the riders at the same time using natural horsemanship. While we were training, he would tell me stories about the Indian's and the olden days and how they worked with their horses and trained them in their time.

After I had been riding for a while, I started to understand the difference I was going to make- trying to save the Corolla/Colonial Spanish Mustangs from going extinct. I have spent many hours training and riding these horses and have come to have a very deep bond with them, even though I don't show it. I know understand the beauty of these animals.

If I were to own a Spanish Mustang, it would mean a lot to me. Horses have done a lot for me. I am now more tolerant and more confident. I have learned to look at a situation from the other side's point of view, especially if the 'other side' is a horse. When you learn to train horses, you become a kinder and gentler person. I am more patient then before and have learned to control my emotions better. Now, I can wait again and again for a wild horse we are training in the round pen to just look at me.

I think that Mr. Edwards and Mill Swamp Indian Horses have done the most to preserve the Corolla Spanish Mustangs. My family and other riders go with him to different places in Virginia and North Carolina, demonstrating natural horsemanship methods and to show people how calm and trainable these horses are. We have even gone to Delaware to the Delaware Horse Expo to participate in the Parade of Breeds. We took one Colonial Spanish Mustang and two Corolla Spanish Mustangs. They were all stallions and there was not one problem the whole weekend.

Every Saturday afternoon I participate in training sessions at Mill Swamp from 2pm-5pm that the public is invited to come and watch. While we train horses and show people just how special they are, Mr. Edward's tells people about the history of the breed.

I would rather be with the horses any day...way before skateboarding anymore. If I somehow won this essay, and won Cara's Spitfire, I would train him to be a great horse. With Mr. Edwards guidance, I would desensitize him, be able to put a saddle on him and eventually condition him to ride many miles every week thru the woods around Mill Swamp.

When he was fully trained, I would take him to all of the horse expo's with Steve to help promote the Colonial Spanish Mustangs. I always talk to people about these horses, if by chance I won this essay, I would finally have my own.

Jacob Anderson