

GRACE: Mustang needs surgery for nasal condition

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from a fracture, making her hoof grow abnormally. Her back-left hock was swollen and calcified from compensating for her weak leg. Even in that sorry state, Grace’s big brown eyes appeared bright and hopeful.

Back in 2013, under gloomy circumstances, Statton fell in love with the Ochoco mustangs.

“I became aware of the Ochoco herd after six horses were shot,” she said. “I went and tried to find them and understand why this happened to wild horses.” She learned the family of eight had only two survivors, a young stallion she named Marley and a foal that eventually died.

Since then, Statton has taken countless photographs of the entire Ochoco herd. Now, she recognizes individuals and keeps track of how they’re doing. Once a horse owner, Statton had to re-home her last horse due to the recession and a knee injury.

“I thought my life with horses was over,” she said. “Marley and the herd gave me a new horse-life I never imagined.”

Two years ago, Statton and her husband, Randy, went to see horses trapped by the Forest Service for birth control implementation. She photographed all the horses. Grace, the skinny, lame filly was among those captured. Statton hadn’t noticed her leg injury until she looked at the photographs later. Statton mentioned to Forest Service staff if the injured filly couldn’t be released, she would adopt her.

This wasn’t the first time she tried to help an injured mustang.

“Previously I’d been in the process of adopting a six-month-old filly named Faith with severe leg injuries,” she said.

The Forest Service approved the removal of Faith by the Central Oregon

Wild Horse Coalition, an organization located in Prineville. Gayle Hunt, the founder of the organization, who is a retired Forest Service employee, helped Statton coordinate Faith’s departure, veterinary care and subsequent adoption.

Life was incredibly difficult for Faith. Her hind leg was fractured and she’d been kicked in the mouth. Somehow, she was able to nurse and keep up with her family. Then it got worse. Visitors to the Ochocos began reporting an emaciated, abandoned filly.

When Statton finally got Faith home, advanced imaging at Bend Equine Medical Center revealed that Faith’s injuries were too catastrophic to be survivable, even in captivity.

“Faith changed my life, and led me to Grace,” said Statton through tears.

When Grace came into her life, it felt like a fulfillment of the plans and hopes for Faith being manifested in this tough filly.

“Her survival shows what a mustang is. They often survive despite adverse conditions like fluctuating food sources, human impact, and accidental injuries,” said Statton.

Grace made the transition from the mountains with ease.

“It took us a while for her first touches, but she was incredibly sweet and seemed to know she was coming here to be taken care of and didn’t have to struggle anymore.”

Then another challenge appeared. Eleven months ago, Grace developed an aggressive nasal discharge that presented like allergies. The confused filly couldn’t get relief. Statton knew she needed more medical help to solve the problem.

“I thought it would go away in the wintertime but it didn’t,” she said. “That’s when Wayne Schmotzer at Bend Equine said we needed a CT scan. The closest operational machine at that time was Washington State University. So we made that trip to get answers. A big trip for a little girl with a bum leg!”

The news wasn’t good.

“When I saved Grace it was just about her leg. I never imagined it would be a nasal condition that proved more threatening,” Statton said. “This won’t go away without intervention, and there are times when she really struggles to breath. Bend Equine has been that amazing committed partner in her wellness. We are so fortunate to have them here. Their facility is equipped to tackle tough things like this.”

Surgeon Wayne

Schmotzer was moved by the relationship Carol and Grace have built.

“Carol has adopted Grace into her life as a true family member. The bond Carol has for this horse is truly touching,” he said.

Schmotzer performed the first of two surgeries at Bend Equine.

“We are hoping to establish a causative diagnosis after performing the first maxillary sinus bone flap to access the abnormal material,” the veterinarian said.

There’s a GoFundMe site under “Carol Statton” for those willing to help with Grace’s medical expenses (<https://www.gofundme.com/savingochocograce>).

“Grace has always been a fighter,” said Statton. “She understands that everyone is trying to help her. The outlook is optimistic but daunting.”

Grace is full of life and energy — and best of all, determination.

“She wants to live,” said Statton. “She wants to breathe easy again. How can I do less than everything possible for her?”

ACADEMY: School plans to operate next year in Sisters

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And, Peterson said, the board is modifying the school’s business plan to include establishing a monthly pledge opportunity and means by which community members can “sponsor” a student. She said it is important to the board to keep SCA “accessible to all socio-economic groups.”

SCA will definitely offer pre-K through 5th-grade education, Peterson reported. Whether there continues to be a middle school offering will depend upon enrollment.

“If there’s a need, we’re going to go with it,” she said.

SCA’s staff is accredited, as are its programs. Peterson said that standards will be maintained going forward. And she expressed profound appreciation of the Sisters community’s broad support.

“Were just incredibly grateful,” she said.

For more information visit www.sisterschristianacademy.com or call 541-549-4133.



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Welcome Eric Wilson, Broker!

Eric is a proud native Oregonian, born in Portland. He began spending time in Central Oregon at a young age. With experience in construction as well as inventory planning and analysis in the corporate space, Eric has acquired valuable tools to help you achieve your real estate goals. Whether you are a first-time home buyer, selling, or searching for a vacation home or investment, Eric will provide professional and friendly service throughout your real estate transaction.

While obtaining his business degree at University of Oregon he met his wife, Tracy, who was raised in Bend. After graduation they married in Bend then moved to Loreto, Mexico where Eric helped clients build their dream vacation homes as a project manager. After their international adventure, the couple moved back to the Portland area where Eric worked for Nike. Now a resident of Tumalo, Eric enjoys spending time with his two children, hunting, and sharing stories around a campfire with friends & family.





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